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CABINET EXPANSION

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STRANDED AT SEA

14 fishermen spend days on deserted atoll

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DESPITE SC ORDER

Unmarried women face abortion hurdles

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HEAD COUNT

Further delay in Census should be avoided

It alone can provide reliable population data

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NEET-PG

MBBS students seek cut-off date extension

NEWS » PAGE 10

We fell short, says Tata Sons chairman on AI flight row

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Tata Sons chairman N. Chandrasekaran on Sunday expressed "anguish" over the Air India fiasco when a man, later identified as Shankar Mishra, went scot-free after urinating on a woman co-traveller mid-flight. He said the airline should have responded swiftly.

"The incident on Air India flight AI 102 on November 26 has been a matter of personal anguish to me and my colleagues at Air India. Air India's response should have been much swifter. We fell short of addressing this situation the way it should have been," he said in a statement five days after the incident came to light.

Mr. Chandrasekaran said the airline would "review and repair" processes to both prevent and address incidents of unruly behaviour.

PMO reviews situation in 'sinking' Joshimath town

Residents blame NTPC's Tapovan-Vishnugad power project for the damage to the sacred town in Uttarakhand, demand proactive resettlement steps by government; NDMA members to visit today

Ishita Mishra
JOSHIMATH

Residents of Joshimath, the Himalayan pilgrim town that appears to be sinking, are blaming major power and road infrastructure projects for their plight and are demanding that the government resettle and give new homes for all those who have lost their properties in the town.

Members of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) are set to visit the town on Monday to assess the situation and advise the Uttarakhand government.

A day after Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami visited Joshimath, which is experiencing land subsidence, residents continued their protest at the tehsil headquarters on Sunday, blaming the Tapovan-Vishnugad power project of the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) for the "irreversible" damage to the sacred town.

Grim situation: Activists address residents of Joshimath in the presence of former Uttarakhand Chief Minister Harish Rawat on Sunday. V.V. KRISHNAN

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) convened a high-level review of the situation in Delhi on Sunday, which was attended by State and Central officials, and experts in geology and disaster management.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also held discussions with Mr. Dhami about the situation.

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'Fake' Indian COVID medicines flooding China's black market

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

Chinese health experts are warning that fake versions of Indian generic medicines are flooding the black market in China as a record surge of COVID-19 cases fuels demand for antivirals, particularly Pfizer's Paxlovid and Indian generic versions.

With Paxlovid in short supply and highly regulated in government clinics, sales of Indian generic versions have ballooned through Chinese e-commerce platforms in the wake of the ending of the "zero-COVID" policy on December 7.

China has seen millions of cases since then – an estimate of the National Health Commission pegged the figure at 250 million as of December 20 – and although most have been mild, cities have seen a high number of deaths particularly among the unvaccinated elderly.

Cheaper alternatives

"Chinese laboratories are raising the alarm over a new potential danger to public health amid a massive wave of COVID-19 infections: a growing trade in fake antiviral medication," Chinese media outlet *Sixth Tone* reported.

"Boxes of Paxlovid are now selling for as much as 50,000 yuan (around six lakh rupees) on the black market, forcing many in China to seek out cheaper alternatives. That is driving a surge in demand for generic versions produced by Indian manufacturers. However, laboratory analysis indicates that a large amount of the 'Indian drugs' are fake," the report said.

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CHINA OPENS BORDERS
» PAGE 11

NEARBY

'Rapid road' develops cracks

BENGALURU
The 'rapid road', a pilot project of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) on Old Madras Road, has developed cracks within a month of its inauguration by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai. » Page 3

E-bus services disrupted

BENGALURU
A protest by the drivers of electric buses at the Yelahanka depot disrupted the services of around 60 buses operated from the point. These drivers are employed by the private operator which leased e-buses to the BMTC under FAME II scheme. » Page 3

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 5

Panel will advise govt. on research into Kannada as a classical language: CM

The Hindu Bureau
HAVERI

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday announced that a high-level committee, comprising litterateurs, would be formed to advise and guide the government on the issue of conducting comprehensive research into Kannada as a classical language and related issues.

"Whatever might be the expense, the government is ready to bear it," he announced, adding that he wanted them to guide the government in getting justice to the cause of Kannada.

Speaking at the valedictory ceremony of the 86th Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana, the Chief Minister chose to respond to the charges made by the president of the sammelana, Doddarange Gowda, in his inaugural address. Dr. Doddarange Gowda had sought to know what the "double engine government" had done for Kannada, particularly for studies in classical language.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai having a word with Doddarange Gowda, poet, at the Kannada Sahitya Sammelana in Haveri on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Clarifying that the Union government had so far released ₹13 crore after Kannada was accorded the status of a classical language in 2008, Mr. Bommai said that funds had been released for renovation of the building to house the Classical Language Research Centre in Mysuru. He stressed the need for a comprehensive research into the classical language. The Chief Minister said that already steps had been taken to release the arrested Kannada activists. "There was a High Court case in this regard and stay has been vacated. I will assure you that all the cases, barring cognizable ones against Kannada activists will be withdrawn by the government," he said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 4

Sammelana opposes imposition of Hindi; wants cases against Kannada activists withdrawn

The Hindu Bureau
HAVERI

The 86th Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana has resolved to oppose imposition of Hindi or any other language on Kannada and also urged the State government to withdraw all cases against Kannada activists.

A resolution in this regard was adopted at an open session on the concluding day of the meet on Sunday. In all, six resolutions were passed.

The first resolution thanked all those who made the three-day mega event a success. The second one urged the State government to promulgate an Ordinance on comprehensive development of Kannada for ensuring effective implementation of the language in education, judiciary, and administration.

The third resolution urged the government to implement, without any delay, the order of the Supreme Court on the pending case of Mahajan Commission report concerning the Karnataka-Maharashtra border dispute.

Through the fourth resolution, the sammelana called upon the government to withdraw all cases registered against Kannada activists immediately.

The fifth one opposed any imposition of Hindi or any other language on Kannada. "As the Indian Constitution recognised all regional languages as equal as per the 8th Schedule, Kannada which is one among the 22 such languages is a sovereign language of Karnataka. Any attempt to impose Hindi or any other language on Kannada will be strongly condemned by the sammelana," the resolution said.

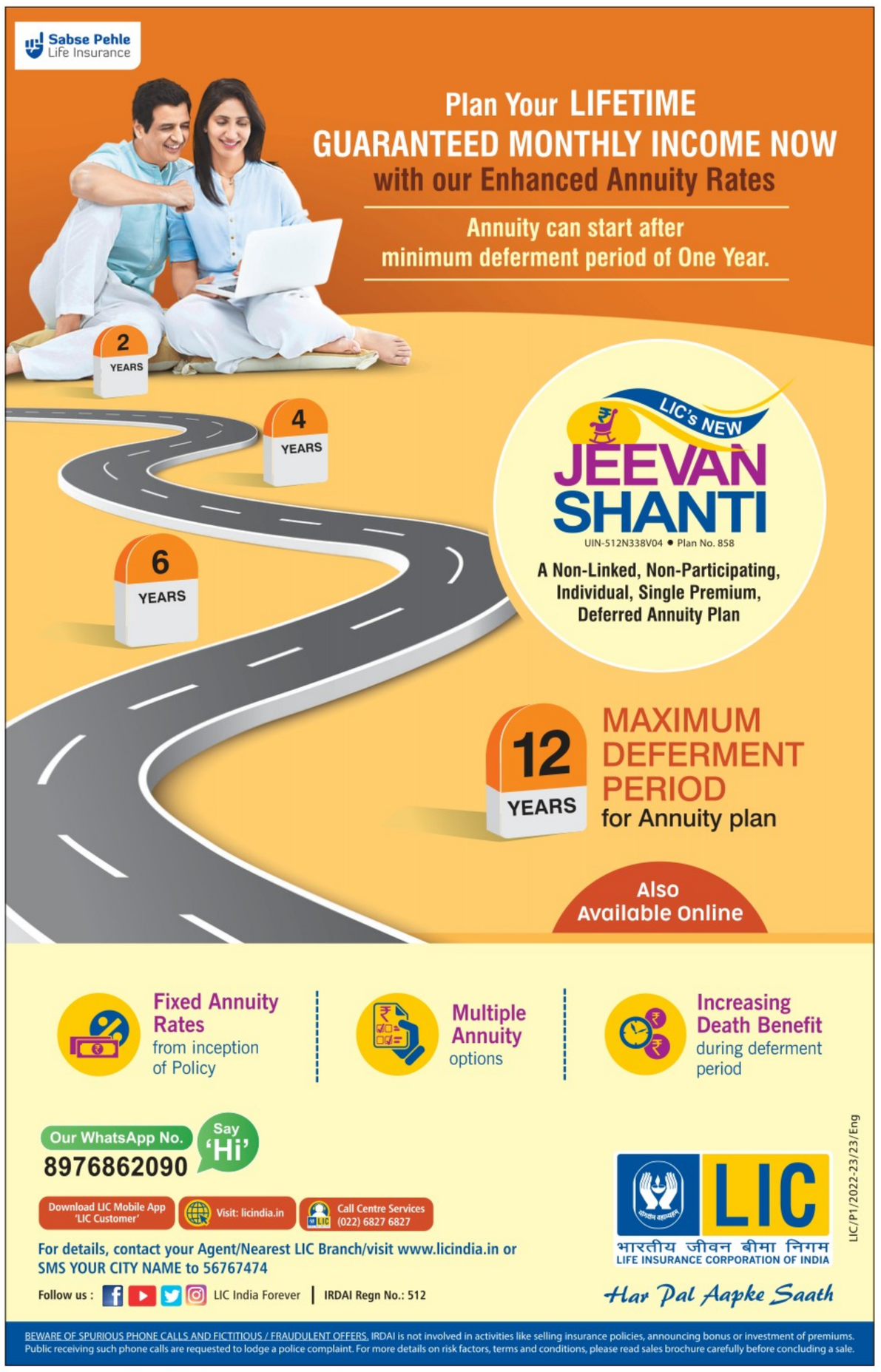
The last one is about organising 'Vishwa Kannada Sammelana' in Davangere. Through the resolution, the sammelana urged the State government to involve the Kannada Sahitya Parishat (KSP) in organising the sammelana and take KSP into confidence in all the meetings to be held for the purpose.

Mandya to host next sammelana

The Hindu Bureau
HAVERI

The 87th Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana will be held in the "sugar bowl of South Karnataka" Mandya. A decision to this effect was taken during the State executive committee of Kannada Sahitya Parishath held in Haveri on Sunday.

» Details Page 4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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Families evacuated from a quickly sinking Joshimath

60 The number of families evacuated from Joshimath which has been declared a landslide-subsidence zone. There are a total of 4,500 buildings in Joshimath and 610 of these have developed huge cracks, according to Garhwal Commissioner Sushil Kumar. "Land subsidence has been going on slowly in Joshimath but it has increased over the past week," he added. PTI

Discoms' dues to gencos drastically reduce this month

62,682 In ₹ crore, the total outstanding dues owed by electricity distribution companies (discoms) to power producers. The amount has almost halved when compared to the ₹1,21,030 crore in the year-ago period. This reduction is due to steps like the implementation of late payment surcharge rules. PTI

Madhya Pradesh lost more tigers than its rival Karnataka

34 The number of tigers lost by 'tiger state' Madhya Pradesh compared to just 15 in Karnataka, its nearest competitor in housing tigers in the country. Karnataka, home to 524 tigers is competing with MP (526) for the tag of India's 'tiger state'. A senior forest department official said it is a "mystery" as to why Madhya Pradesh has recorded higher tiger deaths. PTI

Eviction drive to clear hectares of forest land in Assam's Lakhimpur

500 In hectares, the forest land in Assam's Lakhimpur district where an eviction drive will be conducted, affecting nearly 100 families. The Himanta Biswa Sarma-led dispensation has been carrying out eviction drives in different places in the State since it assumed power in May 2021, with two such exercises undertaken last month. PTI

An increase in coal-based power generation

15 The % by which the country's coal-fired power generation increased year-on-year in December. Coal-based power generation accounts for 76.59% of the total power generation in the country. The NTPC had earlier said that coal-based electricity generation is the backbone of power supply in the country. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Gaining the gavel: the role of the U.S. Speaker

Within the U.S. political system, how does the Speaker of the lower house of Congress influence decisions? How extensive is the hold of California Congressman Kevin McCarthy, the newly-elected Speaker? Will values of 'Trumpism' play a part in Mr. McCarthy's role in holding the House?

EXPLAINER

Narayan Lakshman

The story so far:

Following the narrow mid-term election victory of the U.S. Republican Party in the House of Representatives in November, California Congressman Kevin McCarthy waged a relentless campaign to become Speaker of the lower chamber of Congress. Facing a factionalised and conflict-ridden congressional conservative caucus, a record-making 15 voting rounds were conducted before Mr. McCarthy succeeded in acquiring the Speaker's gavel. With the Senate and White House firmly in the grip of Democrats, Mr. McCarthy now has the daunting task of advancing the Republican cause in Congress with the goal of improving the Grand Old Party's odds of gaining power across the political spectrum in the 2024 presidential election. Given his proximity to former U.S. President Donald Trump, a man who supported Mr. McCarthy's bid for the post of Speaker, the latter might have a polarising effect both within his party and across the political spectrum, which could serve as a strength or weakness depending on what the national mood is 22 months from today.

A daunting role: Newly elected Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Kevin McCarthy holds the gavel on January 7. AFP

What is the role of the Speaker?

The Speaker, whose leadership of the House is mandated under Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, is elected at the beginning of a new Congress by a majority of the lawmakers in the chamber. The Speaker is second in line for the presidency, following the Vice-President, in the event of the President being incapable of continuing in office. While during the fledgling years of American democracy the Speakers of the House usually limited their role to presiding over House proceedings and serving as ceremonial heads, over the years they have increasingly pursued a partisan policy agenda favouring majority control of the House. This shift has been mirrored by the bitter polarisation of the U.S. electorate, with Republicans and Democrats yielding on progressively fewer issues on which they are able to find common ground and allow genuine good governance to flourish for the betterment of all Americans.

What impact will Mr. McCarthy's proximity to Mr. Trump have?

The odds are high that Mr. McCarthy will subtly seek to promote the core values of 'Trumpism' and rush to the political aid of the former president by challenging last year's FBI search of Mr. Trump's residence at Mar-a-Lago, Florida, for classified documents. The new Speaker may also seek to investigate the oft-repeated false claim of the "stolen" 2020 election and ballot voting and the decision-making behind COVID-19-related school closures and vaccine mandates. Based on the Origination Clause – Article I, Section 7, clause 1 of the U.S. Constitution – the House is mandated with initiating revenue bills and could use its leverage in this regard to force financially painful federal government shutdowns as it has done in the past for political advantage. Mr. McCarthy has also hinted at ways in which House control by Republicans could impact foreign policy decisions of the Biden administration when he indicated that he would be averse to giving a "blank cheque" to Ukraine as part of U.S. and NATO support to the country, in its pushback against the Russian invasion there. Given that there have been signals from the Trump camp that he might run for the highest office again in 2024, Mr. McCarthy is likely to actively align himself closely to Mr. Trump's plans and campaigns over the coming two years.

Yet the price of such political adventurism may be high for Mr. McCarthy. Already there has been a sharp backlash against the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court to deny the constitutional right to abortion – an issue that became a rallying point for liberals leading to a better-than-expected performance by Democrats in the midterm election.

What factors will limit the political reach of the Speaker?

Mr. McCarthy's influence as Speaker will be constrained by the tenuousness of his grip on House conservative caucuses. While the Republicans managed to flip the House from Democratic control in the midterm election, the "red wave" that some predicted never happened and they now hold 222 seats in the 435-member chamber. This is almost as narrow a margin as what they had in 2001 (221 seats), implying that it would be a harder slog to get bills passed and crossvoting or abstentions by Republicans could be politically damaging. Mr. McCarthy's headaches are likely to multiply in the face of 15-vote political circus that he had to oversee to get himself elected as Speaker. While he has always been seen as a bridge-builder and a friendly face in Congress with ties to all camps under the Republican tent, the flipside of his success in lobbying and fundraising is that some factions now view him with suspicion.

THE GIST

- The Speaker, whose leadership of the House is mandated under Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution, is elected at the beginning of a new Congress by a majority of the lawmakers in the chamber. A record-making 15 voting rounds were conducted before Kevin McCarthy succeeded in acquiring the Speaker's gavel.
- The odds are high that Mr. McCarthy will subtly seek to promote the core values of 'Trumpism'. He may also seek to investigate the oft-repeated false claim of the "stolen" 2020 election and ballot voting and the decision-making behind COVID-19-related school closures and vaccine mandates.
- Mr. McCarthy's influence as Speaker will be constrained by the tenuousness of his grip on House conservative caucuses. While the Republicans managed to flip the House from Democratic control in the midterm election, they only hold 222 seats in the 435-member chamber which is a very narrow margin.

Can foreign universities set up campuses in India now?

What has the UGC proposed with respect to foreign educational institutions? Is this the first time such a move is being considered? How are UGC's rules different from those mentioned in the NEP?

Jagriti Chandra

The story so far:

Foreign universities and educational institutions could soon be allowed to set up campuses in India as per the draft regulations made public by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

What has the UGC proposed?

The UGC announced the draft regulations for 'Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India' and invited feedback from stakeholders. The proposal allows a foreign university among the top 500 global rankings or a foreign educational institution of repute in its home jurisdiction to apply to the UGC to set up a campus in India. Such a campus can evolve their own admission process and criteria to admit domestic and foreign students. It will also have autonomy to decide its fee structure, and will face no caps that are imposed on Indian institutions. The fee should be "reasonable and transparent". It will also have autonomy to recruit faculty and staff from India and abroad. However, such universities and colleges cannot "offer any such programme of study which jeopardises the national interest of India or the standards of higher education in India." They will also be allowed cross-border movement of funds.

There have been several moves towards bringing in foreign universities in the past. In 2010, the UPA-II government brought the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill, which was not passed as the BJP, the Samajwadi Party and left parties opposed it for multiple reasons including concerns of Western influence on Indian ethos.

What are foreign players saying?

"It is still early days, but the UGC move is a good one. They have provided autonomy in admission criteria, fee and have not imposed restrictions on hiring Indian nationals and also allowed repatriation of surplus funds, which are all enabling provisions," Ravneet Pawha, Vice-President (Global Alliances) & CEO (South Asia), Deakin University said. But she further added that, "If foreign institutions want to hire foreign faculty to offer students a differential, where will we get them from? Secondly, while India wants to be a global destination for higher education what about the infrastructure needed to support that ambition. Thirdly, those Indians who have the aspiration to go abroad to live there will still continue to do so, which means we have to look at those who want a foreign education within the country at a reduced cost and we will need to provide that keeping in mind their paying capacity. "

What does the NEP say?

The National Education Policy (NEP) says that the top 100 universities in the world will be facilitated to operate in India through a legislative framework. According to Fuqran Qamar, a former adviser for education in the erstwhile Planning Commission, "the draft regulations don't follow the text of the NEP, rather uses it as a pretext." He explains that while the NEP talks about creating a legislative framework, the government is following the regulatory route. Critically, the NEP also proposes attracting the top 100 universities, while the UGC draft permits universities with top 500 global rankings. The objective in promoting India as a global education destination is apparently aimed at saving loss of foreign exchange. Nearly 13 lakh students were studying abroad in 2022 and as per the RBI, ₹5 billion was lost in foreign exchange due to students going abroad in FY 2021-2022. The larger goal of the NEP is to take the gross enrollment ratio (GER) in colleges and universities to 50% by 2035 from the current 27%. But online education and private institutions will not benefit those who have no access to education; it will merely offer more choices to the upper and middle class who have 100% GER, says Mr. Qamar.

THE GIST

- The University Grants Commission (UGC) announced the draft regulations for 'Setting up and Operation of Campuses of Foreign Higher Educational Institutions in India'.
- The proposal allows a foreign university among the top 500 global rankings or a foreign educational institution of repute in its home jurisdiction to apply to the UGC to set up a campus in India.
- The objective in promoting India as a global education destination is to primarily save loss of foreign exchange.

Students, teachers hoping for a COVID-free academic year

Teaching moral science to all schoolchildren from the 2023-24 academic year is one of the major goals of the government

WISH LIST 2023

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

While 2022 saw a slew of controversies in the education sector ranging from the hijab row to contentious changes in curriculum, parents, students, and teachers are hoping for a smoother 2023 with a focus on teaching and learning. They are also hoping that the year will not be interrupted by COVID-19 as it did the last two years.

After the pandemic hugely disrupted the school calendar, educational institutions were reopened with full-fledged classes in 2022-23.

A file photo of a class in progress in a Bengaluru school.

However, with fears of COVID-19 cases rising again, as a precautionary measure, many private educational institutions have reintroduced wearing of facemasks, use of sanitiser, and other measures.

Karnataka is the first State in India to have successfully implemented the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, in higher education.

However, implementation of the NEP in primary education is a major challenge to the State government.

While the NEP was set to be implemented in 2022-23, B.C. Nagesh, Minister for School Education and Literacy, has postponed the implementation in the pre-primary and primary classes to the next academic year. It is now being implemented in about 20,000 anganwadis/schools.

As part of preparations for the NEP implementation, the government has constituted six committees to formulate the curriculum framework for early childhood care and education. According to this curriculum framework, training will be given to anganwadi workers through DSERT in the affiliated institutions.

Teaching moral science to all schoolchildren in the State from the 2023-24 academic year is one of the major goals of the government. While the government had initially spoken of teaching only the Bhagavad Gita to students as part of moral science, after outrage from educationists and various organisations, it decided to include moral stories from across religions. A meeting in this regard will take place on Monday under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and it will be attended by various religious leaders.

Riot of colours

Art festival: Visitors at the 20th edition of Chitra Santhe in Bengaluru on Sunday. Works of more than 1,500 artists from across the country were on display at the annual fair organised by the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath. K. MURALI KUMAR

READER'S MAIL

Manage traffic signals at Basavanagudi

Sir, – Traffic signals at Basavanagudi are either switched on too early and switched off late in the night, or are on throughout the day and night, some signals are hardly a few metres apart, and most signals have a stop time of at least 40 to 50 seconds at any time of the day.

Given that only during peak hours in the morning and evening the traffic is heavy in the area, the traffic police could either switch off some of the signals during non-peak hours or reduce the stop time considerably. No signal needs to be on before 9 a.m. or after 9 p.m. This would reduce the wait time at signals considerably and save time and fuel and reduce pollution.

Also, with Gandhi Bazaar main road closed for traffic, the signal at Ramakrishna Ashram circle from Gandhi Bazaar side could be stopped and the one from Chamarajpet side could be merged with the signal from the Bull Temple side.

G. Padmanabhan,
Bengaluru

Increase eligibility of mileage for season tickets

Sir, – According to Indian Railways, the eligibility of mileage for the purpose of issuing season tickets for regular travellers is up to 150 km between two stations.

This distance was notified decades ago when trains were operated on steam locomotives. Now, after broad gauge conversion and electrification, the travel time between stations has considerably reduced, thanks to the increased speed limits. The mileage for season tickets, however, has not been enhanced beyond 150 km. Only in Mumbai-Pune section, season tickets are provided for up to 192 km. Since the public can travel longer distance on electrified tracks at a much lesser time, there is an absolute need for increasing the distance involved by at least 50 km. Hence the Finance Minister may kindly increase the eligibility of travelling on season tickets to up to 200 km on either monthly or quarterly passes in the ensuing Budget for 2023-24, which will help millions of commuters.

A. Rajagopal,
Bengaluru

(Readers can write to letters.bangalore @thehindu.co.in)

Man arrested on blackmailing charge

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The northeast cybercrime police arrested an employee of a jewellery shop for allegedly blackmailing his former female friend with a private video and demanding sexual favour.

Based on the complaint, the police on Sunday arrested him from his house at Halasuru and charged him under various sections of the IT Act. The accused, Samar Parimanik, according to the police, met the victim at a beauty parlour two years ago where she was working and the duo soon become friends. The accused then forced her to work in a dance bar and extorted money.

Unable to bear the harassment, the victim returned to her native place in West Bengal and came back after marriage to work in the city. The accused came to know that she had returned to the city and started harassing her with private videos and demanding sexual favour. He shared the videos with her friends and family members when she refused, said the police.

Fake police officer cheats woman of ₹1.6 lakh

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The northeast cybercrime police are on the lookout for a man who, posing as an officer with the Mumbai crime branch, threatened a woman with a drugs and money laundering case and made away with ₹1.6 lakh transferred online from her account.

Realising that she has been cheated, the victim, Vismitha Prakash, 30, from Rachenahalli approached the police and filed a complaint on Friday.

Ms. Prakash, in her complaint, said that the accused called her on her mobile phone claiming to be an officer from the Customs department and informed her that she had an international courier containing 400 grams of marijuana in her name. The caller told her that he had informed the Mumbai crime branch to take up the case. A few minutes later, she got another call from a person claiming to be an inspector with the Mumbai crime branch who said that she had been booked in a drugs and money laundering case. While on the pretext of inquiry, the accused obtained the bank account details and transferred the money through PayTM.

The police are now trying to track down the accused through money transactions. Cases of fake police cheating women are on the rise and the police have asked people, especially women, not to entertain random calls from people claiming to be police persons.

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Akshata D/o Nanagouda Biradar, residing at H. No.8 Makara Block, Taj Sultanpur, Near Hanuman Temple, K S R P Colony, Gulbarga, Karnataka - 585104, changed my name to Akshata Biradar for all purposes in future.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I LAKSHMI PRIYA SUBBULAKSHMI SUDARMANI holder of Indian Passport No. U0342163, daughter of SUDARMANI SUDALIAPILLAI SUBRAMANIAN having permanent residence in B5/1402, ELITA PROMENADE, 7th Phase JP Nagar, Bengaluru - 560078, Karnataka, India, and presently residing in Flat 713, AL SAHWA COMPLEX, SALALAH, Intend to change my name from LAKSHMI PRIYA SUBBULAKSHMI SUDARMANI to PRIYA SUDARMANI for all practical purpose. Any objection towards my name change may please be communicated to Embassy of India, Muscat, Diplomatic Quarters, Al Khuwair, P.Box no. 1727, Postal Code 112, Ruwi, Sultanate of Oman

LEGAL NOTICE

BEFORE MR. L.R. GARG, ACTING AS SOLE ARBITRATOR UNDER THE RULES OF THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF ARBITRATION
NOTICE TO THE RESPONDENTS THROUGH SUBSTITUTED SERVICE
ICA Case No. AC-2291
M/s Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium Ltd. ....Claimant
Vs
Sh. Manohar Kumar, Sole Proprietor, M/s. Kohinoor Industries & Another ....Respondents
M/s Small Farmers' Agribusiness Consortium Ltd., Claimant has referred & filed a claim application against Sh. Manohar Kumar, Sole Proprietor, M/s. Kohinoor Industries & Another, Respondents under the ICA Rules of Arbitration, whose addresses are given below:
Sh. Manohar Kumar Sole Proprietor M/s. Kohinoor Industries. S.No. 117/1P1, Village Bellampalli, Post Office Bellampalli, Taluk & Distt. Udupi, Karnataka-576124.
M/s. Kohinoor Industries. S.No. 216/17A, 3rd Cross Sasi Thota, Malpe Kodavoor Village, Taluk & Distt. Udupi, Karnataka-576108
M/s. Kohinoor Industries Lakshmi Nivas, Baputota Road, Taluk & Distt. Udupi, Karnataka-576108 ....Respondent No. 1
The Authorised Representative, Canara Bank, 112, JC Road, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560002.
Branch Office of Canara Bank, Canara Bank Building, Court Road Branch, Udupi, Karnataka - 576101 ....Respondent No. 2
The above-named Respondents are hereby summoned to appear before the Ld. Sole Arbitrator in person or by its authorized legal representative at the hearing fixed on 16.01.2023 at 2:30 pm at Federation House, Tansen Marg, New Delhi to answer the same, failing which the Ld. Sole Arbitrator shall proceed to hear and determine the dispute ex-parte.Given under my hand and seal of Indian Council of Arbitration on 23rd December, 2022.
REGISTRAR
INDIAN COUNCIL OF ARBITRATION
Federation House, Tansen Marg, New Delhi-110001

PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Pramodh S/o Ramaiah V, R/o: Madilu, G.Venkatesh Layout, Near Chruch G Venkatesh Layout Karekallahalli, Gauribidanur, Chikkaballapur, Karnataka - 561208 changed my name to Pramodh Ramaiah for all purposes in future.

I, VIVEKANANDA residing at No.760, Balaji Nilaya 1st A Main Road, Vyalikaval, Malleshwaram, Bangalore-560003 have changed my minor son's name from Saajan Anand to Saajan Anand Raahi vide affidavit dated: 06-01-2023 before Notary K.S.Giridhar, Bangalore.

LEGAL NOTICE

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-1, B.S.N.L. BUILDING, 4TH FLOOR, TELEPHONE HOUSE, RAJBHAVAN ROAD, BENGALURU- 560001
O.A. NO. 156/2022
BETWEEN :
ICICI BANK LIMITED
Ulsoor, Bangalore- 560025. ...Plaintiff
And
1. M/s. GLOBAL INFRA VENTURES, Represented by its Proprietor Mr. Sidlingesh. S No. 1396, Block 9 MIG, Souryanagar, Phase-3, Attibele Main Road, Bangalore-562107. ...Defendant
NOTICE ISSUED UNDER RULE 23 (VIII) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES 1993
WHEREAS, the Applicant has instituted an application Under Section 19 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 against you for Recovery of a sum of **Rs. 38,88,460.22/- (Rupees Thirty Eight Lakhs Eighty Eight Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Paisa Twenty Two Only)** together with current and future interest and other relief's. The above Defendant is therefore, hereby directed to before the Tribunal in person or through an advocate or through authorized agents in support of their defence to show cause within 30 days from the date of publication or on **11/05/2023** at **10.30 A.M.,** as to why relief's prayed for should not be granted.
Take notice that in case of default the application will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of this tribunal on this, 30th day of December, 2022.
Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal- I Bangalore

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)
No.: SEE/T(W&M)/MYS/EEE(O)/AE-3/22-23/5546-49 Date: 06.01.2023
TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through E-Procurement Mode Only)
KPTCL invites bids for the following works on PTK Basis
(1) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/SEE/EEE(O)/AE-3/T(W&M)/MYS/REPL/39 for Replacement of 1x12.5MVA, 66/11kV Power transformer-1 by 1x20MVA, 66/11kV Power transformer at 66/11kV Vijayanagara sub-station in Mysuru Taluk and Mysuru district.
(2) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/SEE/EEE(O)/AE-3/T(W&M)/MYS/REPL/40 for Replacement of 1x8 MVA, 66/11KV Power Transformer-2 by 1x12.5 MVA, 66/11KV Power transformer at 66/11KV, Pannyadahundi in Chamarajnagara Taluk & Dist.
(3) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/SEE/EEE(O)/AE-3/T(W&M)/MYS/REPL/41 for Replacement of 1x6.3MVA by 1x12.5 MVA Transformer, 66/11kV Sub station at Bommalapura in Gundlupete Taluk & Chamarajnagara District.
(4) Bid Enquiry No.: KPTCL/SEE/EEE(O)/AE-3/T(W&M)/MYS/REPL/42 for Replacement of 1x8MVA Power Transformer by 1x12.5MVA Power Transformer, 66/11kV Sub station at Attigulipura in Chamarajanagara Taluk & District.
The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to KPTCL website: **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink **"e-procurement-kptcl"** or **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in on or after 12.01.2023.** Any other details can be had from the office of the undersigned during office hours.
Sd/- Supertending Engineer (Ele), Transmission (W&M) Circle, KPTCL, 1st Floor, Prasarana Bhavana, FTS Compound, N.R. Mohalla, Mysuru-570007. Phone: 0821-2455018

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD
INVITATION FOR TENDER
(Only Through e-Procurement Portal)
BWSSB invites tenders from Registered Agencies for the following works.
Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bangalore-560009

Sl. No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender / EMD (in Rs.)	Last Date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	West-2	BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/1608/2022-23 Date: 07.01.2023 (Reserved for SC Category)	Rs. 30,95,246/- / Rs. 31,000/-	23.01.2023 upto 03:00 pm	25.01.2023 after 03:00 pm
2		BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/1608/2022-23 Date: 07.01.2023	1 Rs. 33,65,734/- / Rs.67,400/-		
3			2 Rs. 51,72,737/- / Rs.1,03,500/-		
4			3 Rs. 8,40,901/- / Rs.21,100/-		
5			4 Rs. 44,64,103/- / Rs.89,500/-		
6		BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/1608/2022-23 Date: 07.01.2023 (Reserved for SC Category)	Rs. 18,06,114/- / Rs.22,600/-		
7		BWSSB/EE(W-2)/PB/1608/2022-23 Date: 07.01.2023	Rs. 9,18,986/- / Rs.23,000/-		

The details regarding participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact the under signed office during working hours.
DIPR/CP/MIA/3968/2022-23 Sd/- Executive Engineer (West-2)

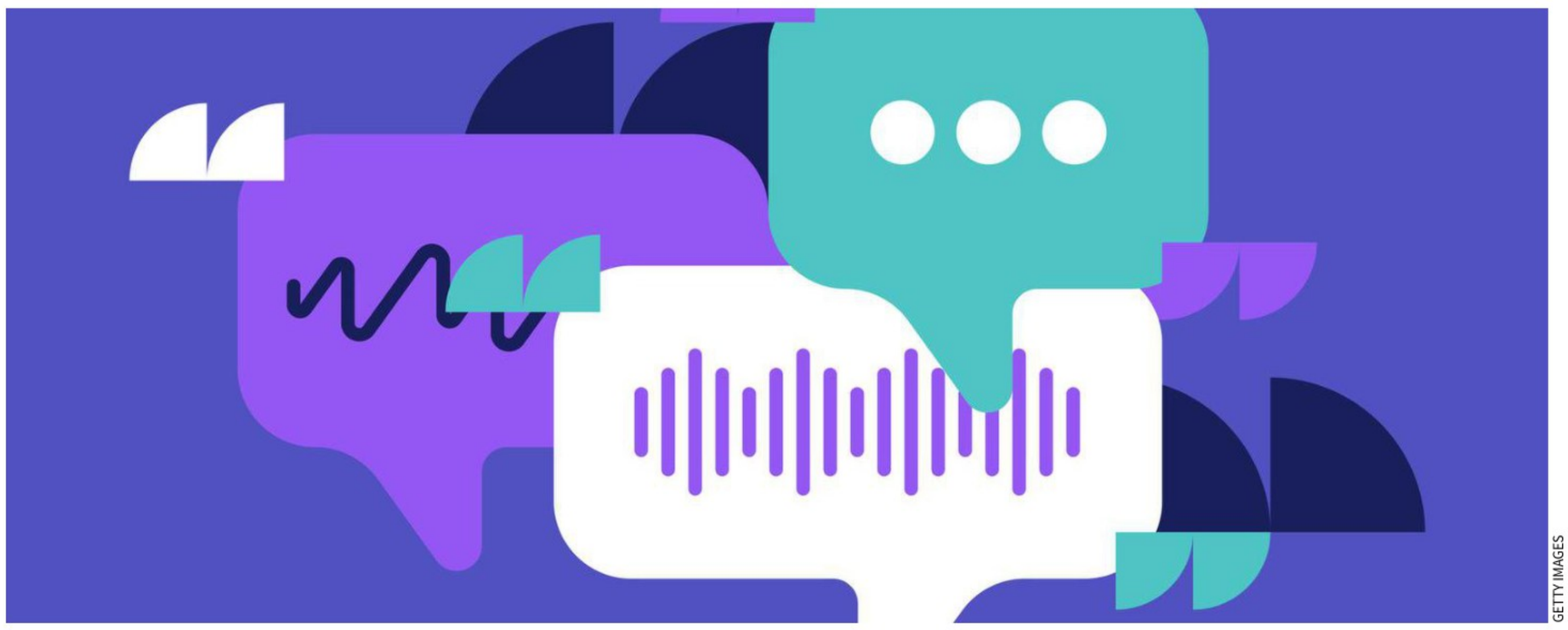
VISVESVARAYA JALA NIGAMA NIYAMITHA
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)
Executive Engineer Office, VJNL, Upper Bhadra Project.
Div no.7 , Hiriyur camp:Chitradurga
Email ID:ubpeediv07@gmail.com Ph no:08194–200187
No.EE/VJNL/UBP/Div.No.07/Hyr.Camp:CTA/2022-23/18 Dt:09.01.2023
SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through e-procurement only)
"Percentage rate" tenders are invited in Two cover system by the undersigned on behalf of Managing Director, Visvesvaraya Jala Nigam Limited, Bangalore, from eligible contractors for below work. Details and tender document may be downloaded through website **http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** For more details Office of the Executive Engineer, VJNL,UBP, Division No.7 Hiriyur, camp Chitradurga Phone No:08194-200187 can be contacted on office hours. Name of work:- Construction of CC road connecting from NH-150A to Babbur village ST colony coming under Hiriyur Municipality limit in Hiriyur for the year 2022-23 under TSP. (VJNL/2022-23/SM/WORK_INDENT2523) Amount put to tender in Lakhs:- 74.61 EMD amount in Lakhs:- 1.50 The last date for submission of tender document 17.01.2023 @ 5.30 PM Date & time of Opening of Technical Bid 19.01.2023 @ 11.00 AM
DIPR/CTA/MCA/ 857/2022-23
Sd/- Executive Engineer, VJNL, UBP, Division No.07 Hiriyur, Camp: Chitradurga

FORM NO. NCLT. 3A
ADVERTISEMENT DETAILING PETITION
[See Rule 35 of the National Company Law Tribunal Rules, 2016]
In the matter of Composite Scheme of Arrangement and Amalgamation By Way Of Capital Reduction Of M/s Marlabs Innovations Private Limited And Amalgamation Of M/s. ET Marlabs Private Limited ("Transferor Company") With M/s. Marlabs Innovations Private Limited (Transferee Company) And their respective shareholders and creditors.
Company Petition No.CP(CAA)/48/BB/2022 in CA(CAA)/26/BB/2022
ET MARLABS PRIVATE LIMITED
(CIN: U72200KA2011PTC060366)
A Company registered under Companies Act of 1956, having its registered office at prestige Blue chip software park, Block-3, 1st Floor, Hosur Road, Adugodi Bengaluru, Karnataka – 560029, India
Represented by Mr. M N Sreedhara, Authorized Signatory
...Petitioner Company 1 /Transferor Company
MARLABS INNOVATIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
(CIN: U72200KA2006PTC039698)
A Company registered under Companies Act of 1956, having its registered office at Bagmane World Technology Centre, 14th Floor, Citrine Block-4, Marathahalli outer ring road, Mahadevapura Bangalore, Karnataka – 560048, India
Represented by Mr. Manish Singhvi, Authorized Signatory
...Petitioner Company 2 /Transferee Company
NOTICE OF PETITION
A Joint Petition under Sections 230 to 232 of the Companies Act, 2013 filed for seeking approval of the Composite Scheme of Arrangement And Amalgamation By Way of Capital Reduction of M/s Marlabs Innovations Private Limited And Amalgamation of **M/s. ET Marlabs Private Limited ("Transferor Company") With M/s. Marlabs Innovations Private Limited (Transferee Company)** And their respective shareholders and creditors was presented on the **21st day of December, 2022** and the said Petition is fixed for hearing before the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Bengaluru Bench on **21stday of February, 2023.** Any person desirous of supporting or opposing the said petition should send to the respective Petitioner Companies Register office, notice of his/her intention, signed by him/her or his/her Advocate/ Representative, with his/her name and address, so as to reach the Petitioner's Register office not later than Fifteen days before the date fixed for the hearing of the Petition. Where he/she seeks to oppose the Petition, the grounds of opposition or copy of his/her affidavit shall be furnished with such notice. A copy of the Petition will be furnished by the undersigned to any person requiring the same on payment of the prescribed charges for the same.

For ET Marlabs Private Limited	For Marlabs Innovations Private Limited
Sd/-	Sd/-
Mr. M N Sreedhara	Mr. Manish Singhvi
Authorised Signatory	Authorised Signatory

Date: 09.01.2023
Place: Bengaluru

CACHE



GETTY IMAGES

The potential of generative AI: creating media with simple text prompts

While generative artificial intelligence has the potential to enable efficiency and productivity across multiple industries and applications , it can also create harm and adversely impact society through misuse, perpetuating biases, exclusion, and discrimination

Ashish Jaiman

Generative AI is a cutting-edge technological advancement that utilises machine learning and artificial intelligence to create new forms of media, such as text, audio, video, and animation. With the advent of advanced machine learning capabilities like large language models, neural translation, information understanding, and reinforcement learning, it is now possible to generate new and creative short and long-form content, synthetic media, and even deepfakes with simple text, also known as prompts.

AI innovation

Top technology companies, like Microsoft, Google, Facebook, and others, have commercial AI labs researching and publishing academic papers to accelerate these AI innovations. In recent years, we have seen investments in GANs (Generative Adversarial Networks), LLMs (Large Language Models), GPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformers), and Image Generation to experiment and, in some cases, create commercial offerings like DALL-E for image generation and ChatGPT for text generation. For example, ChatGPT can write blogs, computer code, and marketing copies and even generate results for search queries.

For example, the prompt "What is Generative AI" in the ChatGPT1 tool generates the following text:-

Generative AI is a type of artificial intelligence that involves creating new, original content or data using machine learning algorithms. It can be used to generate text, images, music, or other types of media. Generative AI works by training a model on a large dataset and then using that model to generate new, previously unseen content that is similar to the training data. This can be done through techniques such as neural machine translation, image generation, and music generation. Generative AI has the potential to revolutionize many industries by automating the creation of content and enabling the generation of new ideas and concepts. However, it also raises ethical concerns about the potential for biased or inaccurate content to be generated and disseminated. It is important for developers and users of generative AI to consider the potential impacts and ensure that the technology is used ethically and responsibly.

Similarly, the prompt "futuristic athletic sneaker, digital art, 3d render on a yellow background with paint splashing in the air" in Microsoft Bing Image Create, generated this image (see picture 1).

Different ways Generative AI is used

Below are some interesting use cases for generative AI; this is not an exhaustive list but offers a sense of the varied possibilities.

Generative AI can craft sales, marketing, and brand messaging. Agencies can generate personalised social media posts, blogs, and marketing text and video copies by providing a text prompt to a Generative AI service, like ChatGPT. In addition, the service can quickly iterate different text by simply tweaking the prompt to effectively communicate with the audience. DALL.E, a generative image generation service, can also generate original imagery to align with the branding. Many startups are exploring services like DALL.E2, Bing Image Create, Stable Diffusion, and MidJourney to create their brand logo and to align the same with Generative AI text messaging. Instoried is using Generative AI for marketers to become better copywriters.

GitHub, Copilot6 and ChatGPT1 can generate code and help with developer productivity. It can suggest entire functions, snippets, and even fully functioning modules and generate code in real-time right in your editor. ChatGPT can also help you write code to build a technology service or integration quickly. Generative AI can also be used for generating synthetic data for data augmentation and creating additional training data to train and test AI models to experiment at scale.

Furthermore, generative artificial intelligence can sift through numerous legal research materials and produce a pertinent, specific, and actionable summary. As a result, it can reduce the countless hours of human research and enable them to focus on more complex and exciting problems. In addition, ChatGPT can assist in providing answers to complex queries and augment search algorithms to generate responses to complex search queries. Generative AI can accelerate the discovery of new research, drafting and synthesising documents and reports. Wranga is using AI to generate media reviews to help parents to monitor and steer their children's content consumption habits.

Picture 1.

Generative AI can also help create and simulate complex engineering, design, and architecture. It can help speed up the iterative development and testing of novel designs. Architecture, machine design, and even house floor plans are all be made by Generative Image and video technology. A Generative AI service, for instance, can let engineers and consumers design and iterate over floor plans and architectures with as little as a text prompt or vocal command.

It can also help health professionals with their medical diagnosis. AI can generate potential and alternative treatments personalised to patients' symptoms and medical history. For instance, DeepMind AlphaFold can predict the shape of protein.

Concerns around AI use

Overall, generative AI has the potential to enable efficiency and productivity across multiple industries and applications at scale. However, if not designed and developed responsibly with appropriate safeguards, Generative AI can create harm and adversely impact society through misuse, perpetuating biases, exclusion, and discrimination. Therefore, we must add rigour and responsibility to developing AI technology, enforce ethical guidelines, conduct regular audits for fairness, identify and address biases, and protect privacy and security. Several concerns surround the use of generative AI, including bias and exclusion. Generative AI systems can perpetuate and amplify existing biases. If the models are trained on biased, non-inclusive data, they will generate biased outputs, such as offensive or discriminatory language, demeaning and degrading imagery, and prejudicial content. For example, initially, generative imagery would show only images of white men for the prompt "CEO." Big tech has taken corrective actions to mitigate such bias issues and develop AI responsibly in the last few years. Generative AI systems can create content for malicious purposes, such as deepfakes, disinformation, and propaganda. It can also generate offensive or inappropriate content. Nefarious actors may use AI-generated media to manipulate people and influence public opinion. These systems can potentially access sensitive information, raising concerns about data privacy and security. It may also produce low-quality and less accurate information , specifically in the context of complex engineering and medical diagnosis. It can be challenging to determine who is responsible for the content generated by a generative AI system – the acquisition and consent model around the training data and intellectual property issues make it difficult to hold anyone accountable for any harm resulting from its use. Overall, it is essential to carefully consider the potential harms, threats, and concerns of Generative AI systems and ensure that they are used responsibly and ethically. Therefore, we must add adequate policy, regulation, awareness, and education guardrails to develop and use Generative AI services ethically and responsibly.

The writer is Director of Product for the Bing organisation at Microsoft

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on Mount Everest, Earth's tallest mountain above sea level, located in the Mahalangur Himal sub-range of the Himalayas

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1

Mt. Everest's recognition as the highest point on the Earth's surface was confirmed only in the 1850s thanks to a mega survey undertaken in the Indian sub-continent. What was the survey called and what was the original name for the mountain?

QUESTION 2

What is the local name in Tibetan and Nepali for the grand mountain?

QUESTION 3

The currently accepted height, recalculated in the 1990s, is 29,035 ft (8,850m). By how many feet has the mountain 'grown' from the earlier accepted height?

QUESTION 4

Because of the planet's oblong shape, Everest's peak is not the farthest point from the Earth's centre. Which stratovolcano in the Andes has the honour?

QUESTION 5

It is well-known that Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary were the first humans to successfully scale the peak. In which year did the expedition take place? Who led it?

QUESTION 6

Which legendary climber when asked why he wanted to scale the peak, famously uttered "Because it's there?"

Visual question:
Identify this legend receiving the Tenzing Norgay National Adventure award. What is his claim to fame? AFP

Questions and Answers to the January 6 edition of the daily quiz: 1) A.R. Rahman composed a jingle for this brand by adapting Mozart's 25th symphony. **Ans: Titan**

2) This country has a street named after the Mozart of Madras. **Ans: Markham city in Canada**

3) The common link between the songs Tere Rang and Pookkalae Sattru Oyivedungal. **Ans: Both songs are sung by Shreya Ghoshal and Haricharan**

4) This song set in the Hamsadhwani ragam was composed by the maestro for this 2002 movie directed by Mani Ratnam. **Ans: Vellai Pookal and *Kannathil Muthamittal***

5) This song penned by a former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister was crooned by several leading artists for this occasion. **Ans: Semmozhiyaana Thamizh Mozhiyaam. It was composed for the World Classical Tamil Conference 2010.**

6) A.R. Rahman was nominated for a BAFTA in 2011 for this movie. **Ans: *127 Hours***

Visual: The movies where Kamal Haasan and A.R. Rahman have collaborated on. **Ans: *Thenali* and *Indian***

Early Birds: Ramprakash| Farook Abdulla| C. Saravanan

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

This is turning out to be a mammoth task!

I am planning to skip dinner and leave work early as I have had a very hearty lunch

S. Upendran

What is the difference between 'terrorist' and 'extremist'? (Kamal Laddha, Bengaluru)

There is a tendency nowadays, especially among reporters, to use the two words synonymously – it is, however, wrong to do so. A 'terrorist', as the word suggests, is someone who uses 'terror' to achieve his goal. He not only talks the talk, but also walks the walk. He is someone who will not hesitate to use violence to get what he wants. Individuals can be labelled 'terrorists' and so can organisations.

The lone terrorist was shot dead by the police as she tried to detonate the bomb.

Like a terrorist, an 'extremist' believes in a cause very strongly, and he does not hesitate to share his thoughts on the matter. He uses his ability to communicate to try and bring about political and religious changes in society. Many of his ideas are seen by most people as being unreasonable and unacceptable. Unlike a terrorist, an extremist does not always resort to violence to achieve his goals. There are a few, however, who will not hesitate to use it, if the situation demands it.

Most people in his own party consider the newly elected MP to be an extremist.

How is the word 'mammoth' pronounced? (G. Venkateswaran, Thanjavur)

The word consists of two syllables. The vowel in the first is pronounced like the 'a' in 'dam', 'Sam' and 'ham', and the 'o' in the second, sounds like the 'a' in 'china'. The word is pronounced 'MA-meth' with the stress on the first syllable. It comes from the Russian 'mamant' meaning 'earth'. The word was first borrowed into English to refer to the remains of the large woolly elephant whose bones were discovered in Siberia. With the passage of time, the word acquired another meaning – 'gigantic' or 'extremely large'.

Installing a lift in this old house is proving to be a mammoth task.

Why do we say 'hearty meal? (K. V. Nalini, Nellore)

Most of us normally use the word 'hearty' when we congratulate someone. When someone gets married we normally say, 'Hearty congratulations!'. The word 'hearty', however, has several different meanings. In the context of a meal, it means 'large'. When you have a 'hearty meal', you have a large meal; you eat something in large quantities.

Harish always makes it a point to have a hearty breakfast.

upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Tenuous:
lacking substance or significance (used as an adjective)

Synonyms:
slight, thin, flimsy, fragile

Usage:
It was very easy for the opposing team to break down his tenuous arguments

Pronunciation: bit.ly/tenuouspro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈtɛnjʊəs/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

K.R. Puram-Whitefield line safety inspection likely between Feb. 16 and 20

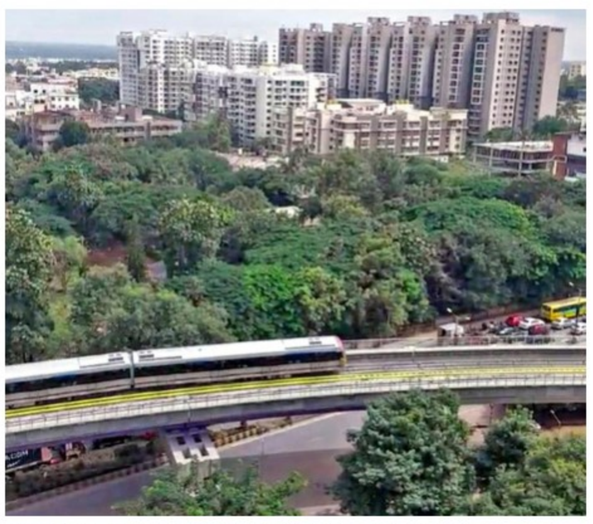
The metro line is expected to be opened for the general public in March

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The safety inspection of the eagerly awaited Namma Metro line from K.R. Puram to Whitefield is likely to happen between February 16 and 20.

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (BMRCL) managing director Anjum Parwez told *The Hindu* that the BMRCL would soon start trial runs of two trains on the tracks. Trial runs are currently limited to one train. Thereafter, the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety (CMRS) will be approached to carry out the safety inspection.

The K.R. Puram to Whitefield line is a part of the Baiyappanahalli to Whitefield line (Purple line) under Phase II.



The BMRCL will soon start trial runs with two trains on the K.R. Puram-Whitefield line, according to its managing director Anjum Parwez. FILE PHOTO

In two stages

As per the plan, the BMRCL is opening the 15-km line in two stages – in the first stage, the reach between K.R. Puram and Whitefield with a distance of 13.5 km will be opened. In October, the BMRCL started trial runs initially for 3.5 km between Whitefield and Pattandur Agrahara and later extended to K.R. Puram. Mr. Parwez said, "Right now, the trial is being done on the line using a single train from K.R. Puram to Whitefield. In the coming days, we will do the trial run with two trains on both parallel tracks. Thereafter, the CMRS will be approached to do the safety inspection. The commissioner will carry out various inspections starting from traction to singling works, passenger amenities, safety issues, and others."

The BMRCL has set a deadline of March for opening the line between K.R. Puram and Whitefield and the rest of the 2-km line (K.R. Puram to Baiyappanahalli) will be opened mid-year. Due to the delay in the execution of the open web girder over the railway track near Benniganahalli, the BMRCL is not in a position to open the entire extended Purple line. The official said that construction work related to the open web girder over the live track is going on at a good pace with the support of South Western Railway. Construction of an open web girder will link Whitefield metro line with Baiyappanahalli Depot.

Feeder services

"After starting the commercial operations between K.R. Puram and Whitefield, sufficient numbers of feeder services will be provided from Baiyappanahalli to K.R. Puram for the benefit of metro passengers," he said. The commercial operations will start using the Whitefield Depot. Initially, five sets of trains will be operated on the line. Sources said that the line may be opened for the general public prior to the announcement of the Assembly election dates.

Once the Whitefield line becomes operational, the passenger volume will increase drastically. The ridership is expected to increase by 3.5 lakh with the opening of the line that connects the major IT corridor.

The BMRCL started construction work in 2016-17. Due to various factors such as changes in the alignments, delay in the acquisition of properties, COVID-19, Russia-Ukraine war, and incessant rain, the project got delayed.

E-bus services from Yelahanka depot disrupted for 3 hours

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A protest by the drivers of electric buses at the Yelahanka depot disrupted the services of around 60 buses operated from the point. These drivers are employed by the private operator which leased e-buses to the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) under FAME II scheme.

On Sunday, the drivers refused to take out the buses demanding better salary, amenities at the workplace, medical facilities, and others. The drivers demanded an increase in salary from ₹25,000 to ₹30,000 per month, canteen facility, issuance of appointment letter, bus passes to travel in city limits, ESI facility, and others.

An official of the BMTC said, "The BMTC management has no role to play in the dispute between drivers and operators who have provided e-buses under FAME II. As per the agreement, the operator has to provide drivers, maintain buses during the lease period, and establish the required infrastructure, and others. When we received the information, we took up the matter with the operator. After their intervention, the drivers reported back to duty. For three hours, there were disruptions in services."

A protest by electric bus drivers led to the services being affected on Sunday.

Under the FAME II scheme, the BMTC has provided 300 buses. The BMTC had started running buses received under FAME II in August 2021.

"At a time when governments are promoting the transport corporation to run buses through private operators, Sunday's incident at Yelahanka is a warning sign. Earlier, the BMTC used to pay less than ₹10,000 a month for two years for drivers directly recruited by the corporation. Now, these drivers employed by private operators receive over ₹20,000 and they have protested alleging that they are not getting enough salary to lead a decent life in the city and demanded better workplace conditions," said a union leader of the road transport corporation employees.

INBRIEF

Temple trustee arrested for assaulting woman devotee

The Amruthahalli police on Sunday arrested the trustee of Lakshmi Narasimha temple for allegedly assaulting a woman devotee inside the temple on December 21.

The accused, Munikrishna, allegedly assaulted Hemavathy and dragged her out by her hair, which was recorded in the CCTV camera and the footage later went viral on social media, leading to public outcry. Meanwhile, the victim filed a complaint with the police, which led to the arrest of the accused, a police officer said. Munikrishna, in his defence, told the police that Hemavathy was behaving in an unruly manner after entering the temple and alleged that she claimed to be the wife of god and wanted to sit next to the idol. He alleged that she spat on the priest who was present at the time and objected to her behaviour. Munikrishna also said that the woman, after a few days, returned to the temple and apologised for her behaviour and filed a complaint only when the issue became viral.

Exhibition of historical documents, photographs

Bangalore University History Museum, in association with the Karnataka State Archives Department, has organised a two-day exhibition of historical documents and photographs from January 10 at the History Museum on the Jnana Bharathi campus. Registrar N. Mahesh Babu, in a release, asked the public and students of all the departments and colleges of the university to visit the exhibition.

Text & Context

A weekday feature on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and a quiz. In the latest issue (January 9, Monday), the following explainer is available:

- Gaining the gavel: the role of the U.S. Speaker
  bit.ly/usspeakergavel

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access this article. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access the article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

Within month of its launch, 'rapid road' develops cracks

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The 'rapid road', a pilot project of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) on Old Madras Road, has developed cracks within a month of its inauguration.

The BBMP has not yet finalised the project and is still in the evaluation process.

On December 8, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai inaugurated the pilot rapid road stretch and said that the government would consider construction of rapid roads by using precast technology only after examining its quality and cost.

Cracks being filled on 'rapid road', a 375-metre-long stretch laid using pre-cast slabs as a pilot project, on Old Madras Road in Bengaluru. SUDHAKARA JAIN

For the last few days, the cracks have been noticed by motorists using the stretch. Arvind Krishnan, a resident of Indiranagar 1st Stage, said, "The civic body had claimed that the road will be of good quality and will last for years compared to other roads. But from day one, the road seemed to be of poor quality and now one can see that it has developed cracks, which will be dangerous for motorists."

Missed deadlines

In the 'rapid road' method, pre-cast slabs are prepared, joined, strengthened, and then laid. As an experiment, a 375-metre-long stretch was laid on the busy Old Madras Road. The stretch was opened for traffic after missing several deadlines.

'Waste of public funds'

"Rapid or not, white-topping is a colossal waste of public funds and an environmentally disastrous project. Unproven technology and not considering citizen's opinion on development in our area is not true democracy. The BBMP Commissioner just doesn't have time to listen to our real issues," said Sneha Nandihal from I Change Indiranagar.

Report sought

Since it is a new technology, a BBMP official said they were still in the process of evaluating and checking how the cracks had developed. "The investigation is going on. We have asked for an evaluation report by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc)," the official said.

Couple arrested for killing man over illicit affair

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Electronics City police on Sunday arrested a couple who allegedly killed a man over an illicit affair and carried his body on a motorcycle to dispose it.

The accused have been identified as Reena and Gangesh, a couple from Uttar Pradesh who were working as labourers.

According to the police, Reena was allegedly having an affair with her neighbour, Nibashish Pal, who started harassing her to "cooperate" with his friends too. Unable to bear the harassment, Reena confessed to her husband, Gangesh, about the affair and sought his help to get rid of Pal.

Body dumped

The duo decided to eliminate Pal and hatched a plan. Reena invited Pal home for a party and offered him liquor and served him dinner laced with marijuana seeds. Soon, Pal fell unconscious, following which Reena strangled him to death using her veil. Gangesh borrowed a motorcycle from his friend Bijoy and carried the body to an isolated place and dumped it on the roadside, said the police. The accused returned home and soon vacated the house and went to Shikaripura to settle there.

CCTV camera footage

Meanwhile, the Electronics City police, who recovered the body, began to investigate and found the CCTV camera footage from in and around where the couple was carrying the body on a motorcycle. They traced the bike and questioned the owner, Bijoy, before arresting the couple from Shikaripura.

The couple has been booked for murder and Bijoy for abetting the crime.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, JAN. 09	
RISE 06:44	SET 18:09
RISE 20:13	SET 08:31
TUESDAY, JAN. 10	
RISE 06:44	SET 18:09
RISE 21:02	SET 09:12
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 11	
RISE 06:45	SET 18:10
RISE 21:49	SET 09:50

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	29	20
Mysuru	28	15
Bengaluru	26	17

Bengaluru Today
26°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable. Night also will be cool and hazy.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
27°C A dry weather to continue. Day will be comfortable and humid. Night will be cool with haze.

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THE HINDU
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Bilimale: Kannada writers need to respond to the present times

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Kannada writers and representative organisations of the language seem to have turned their backs to multiple crises plaguing Kannada and Karnataka today, lamented writer and scholar Purushottam Bilimale, speaking at the Jana Sahitya Sammelana, a protest literary meet in Bengaluru on Sunday, organised as a counter to the Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana in Haveri.

"It pains me to note that while Gita Hariharan wrote an English novel inspired by the assassination of M.M. Kalburgi, these assassinations and what led to them have not yet inspired any work of creative writing in Kannada. Our writers need to respond to our times," he said, adding that we need to take a tough stand against all attacks on the syncretic culture, which is the mainstay of Kannada.

Sahitya Akademi award-winning writer Mudnakudu Chinnaswamy, who inaugurated the meet, said, "Conscious citizens of this country should tie down the mad horse of ethnic nationalism that is provoking violence through lies and hate." Since a party's agenda of "pushing out Muslims from the mainstream" has now spread to the literary event as well, this protest meet is called for, he said.

Textbook revision

Coming down heavily on the recent revision of textbooks, he said it was evident how the revision had obliterated all criticisms of caste hierarchy in textbooks. However, he was optimistic that such exercises at rewriting history were futile in a digital age.

Several writers condemned the alleged exclusion of Muslim writers from the Haveri sammelana. "Muslims are increasingly finding themselves robbed of all platforms for their expressions, making many Muslim youths more introverted, probably pushing them to take to literature to express themselves. But even in literature, their voices are being stifled," said senior journalist Dinesh Amin Mattu.

Rahmat Tarikere recalled the former Prime Minister late Atal Bihari Vajapayee's advice to the then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi to follow the "Rajadharma", and said, "today we need to tell the government of the State and all institutions that use taxpayer's money to follow Karnataka's 'Samskrutika Dharma', which is essentially inclusive".

The Jana Sahitya Sammelana adopted eight resolutions, including one demanding the Kannada Sahitya Parishat to be inclusive in all its programmes.

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Congress makes 10 declarations for SC/ST welfare

The party has urged the government to accept the Nagamohan Das Commission report in toto and bring the enhanced reservation legislation under Schedule 9 of Constitution before Jan. 30

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Stating that the Bharatiya Janata Party government was misleading the public over the enhancement of reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the State, the Congress on Sunday urged the government to accept the Nagamohan Das Commission report in toto and bring the enhanced reservation legislation under Schedule 9 of the Indian Constitution before January 30.

The Congress also promised to table the A.J. Sadashiva Commission report on internal reservation among the SC communities in the first Assembly session, if voted to power.

"Though the Nagamohan Das Commission report was submitted in July 2020, the BJP government deliberately and maliciously sat over the report for three years and neither the Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai nor the Prime Minister Narendra Modi government showed any interest to enhance reservation. However, now the State government has enacted a law only to enhance the reservation but not to include the same in the 9th Schedule, which is nothing but misleading the public for the furtherance of prospects of their party," said the Congress's declaration made during the SC/ST Aikyatha Samavesha at Chitradurga.

AICC president M. Mallikarjun Kharge, KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar, and other Congress leaders at the SC/ST convention in Chitradurga on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Ahead of the Assembly elections, the BJP government enhanced reservation for SCs from 15% to 17% and for STs from 2% to 7%, in its bid to woo the communities. In response, the Congress has made 10 declarations during the convention on its programmes to SC/ST communities.

On the Sadashiva Commission report, it said: "After obtaining the views of both the Houses, we will recommend to the Union government to provide reservation to all sections of the SC category to ensure social justice by protecting the interest of all sections of the SC category," the declaration, read out by former Deputy Chief Minister G. Parameshwara, said.

Urging the community to remain united, AICC president M. Mallikarjun Kharge said: "No one will bother if you are divided. Attempts would be made to divide and rule like the British did. Reservation has been provided through Constitution and it is important to protect the Constitution, democracy and your welfare. Is it not important to protect reservation that was brought in after deliberations between B.R. Ambedkar and Gandhiji?" While SC/ST benefitted from 50% reservation in employment in public sector undertakings, it is now being prevented through privatisation of PSUs."

He said: "Mr. Modi promised 2 crore jobs every year and by now 18 crore jobs should have been given. Has anyone asked about it? He had promised to double farmers' income. Has it increased?"

The Leader of the Opposition in Legislative Assembly Siddaramaiah said that the BJP never believed in social equality and did not respect or commit to the Constitution. "Why did BJP oppose reservation though it said it was in favour of social justice? BJP does not work for welfare of backward classes, minorities, farmers and women."

Committing to implementation of 10 declarations, KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar said BJP is misleading public on reservation issues and is using emotional issues for furthering its politics. Other leaders including AICC general secretary in-charge of Karnataka Randeep Surjewala and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council B.K. Hariprasad questioned the commitment of BJP to the welfare of SC/STs, and accused BJP of attempting to change the Constitution.

Highlights of Congress declaration

- Provisions of SCP-TSP Act to be amended to utilise 100% money allocated in the Budget and limit the deemed expenditure to 5%.
- PTCL Act to be amended to ensure land granted to SC/ STs is protected.
- Houses to 2.54 lakh SC homeless families and 1.32 ST homeless families in five years.
- Filling all the backlog posts in five years.Two acres of dry land to all landless SC/ST families with borewells.
- Loan and subsidy for 10,000 unemployed youth annually for purchase of vehicles for self-employment.
- Reintroduction of scholarships for pre-matric students from SC/ST communities in the name of Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar Educational Scholarship scheme.
- Savithri Bai Pule Vidya Yojana to stop dropout rate among SC/ ST students between classes 1 and 10. Amount to be remitted to the account of mothers.

Mandya to host next sahitya sammelana

The Hindu Bureau
HAVERI

There was keen competition to host the next sahitya sammelana by various districts, which finally resulted in the committee members being asked to vote

The 87th Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana will be held in the "sugar bowl of South Karnataka" Mandya. A decision to this effect was taken during the State executive committee of Kannada Sahitya Parishath held in Haveri on Sunday.

There was keen competition to host the next Sahitya Sammelana by various districts, which finally resulted in the committee members being asked to vote for the next venue.

Addressing presspersons after the closed door State executive committee meeting at the Circuit House in Haveri on Sunday, president of Kannada Sahitya Parishat (KSP) Mahesh Joshi said that after being put to vote, Mandya bagged 17 out of the total 46 votes.s

Applications received

He said that KSP had received applications from the districts of Bengaluru Rural, Mandya, Chikkamagaluru, Uttar Kannada, Ramanagaram, Ballari, Belagavi, Kolar and Chickballapur for hosting the sammelana and subsequently the applications of Bengaluru Rural, Belagavi, Ramanagaram, Kolar and Chickballapur were withdrawn. With this, only Mandya, Chikkamagaluru, Uttar Kannada and Ballari remained in the fray. Out of the 54 members of the committee, 46 had taken part in the meeting, he said.

Although the announcement on the next venue of sammelana was to come on Saturday, it was postponed due to differences among the executive committee members during the meeting held on Saturday night. Initially the State president had expressed his intention to tour all the hosting districts to check the feasibility and then decide on the venue, to which however many objected.

As representative districts vying for hosting the sammelana were engaged in altercation, the meeting ended abruptly. Mr. Joshi had announced that the adjourned meeting would be held on Sunday to decide the next venue. Accordingly on Sunday, the executive committee meeting was held and voting took place.

'Vallabhbhai Patel's linguistic State model reason for border disputes'

The Hindu Bureau
HAVERI

President of the 86th Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana Doddarange Gowda speaking at the session on issues concerning Kannadigas in Haveri on Sunday. SANJAY RITTI

The president of the 86th Akhila Bharata Kannada Sahitya Sammelana Doddarange Gowda said the reorganisation of States based on language, carried out by 'Iron Man of India' Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was the reason for inter-State border disputes.

Speaking at the session on "Gadinadu mattu Horanadu Kannadigara Talamalagalu" (Anxieties of Kannadigas residing in border areas and outside State) on the concluding day of Kannada Sahitya Sammelana in Haveri on Sunday, Dr. Gowda said that Vallabhabai Patil carried out the reorganisation of States unscientifically based only on the criteria of language, which consequently led to various problems.

Dr. Gowda accused Vallabhbhai Patel of drawing borders of States without much thought and based only on linguistic lines. He said the real reorganisation of States should have been done based on both culture and language and not just on linguistic lines. "There is need for reorganisation of States based on both language and culture," he said.

Referring to Karnataka's border issues with Kerala and Maharashtra, he pointed out that over 90% of the population in Akkalkot, Solapur and Jath region of Maharashtra constituted Kannadigas and they should be included in Karnataka.

On Kannada schools

Resource person Revanasiddappa Jalade took exception to the policy of allowing establishment of English medium Schools without any restrictions. He said the neglect of Kannada and Kannada schools was intolerable. The government should bring out legislation on strengthening Kannada and Kannada schools, he demanded.

He pointed out that only 48 Kannada schools were remaining now in border areas and emphasised the need for relaxing the regulations that were preventing establishment of Kannada schools. "In the last three years, not a single Kannada school has started functioning in Bengaluru, while over 150 English medium schools were established in the same period. The president of the sammelana wants the government to provide education in Kannada medium from Class I to V. The government should consider it seriously and implement it," he said.

In border areas

Presiding over the session, the Chairman of the Karnataka Border Area Development Authority C. Somashekhar said that 68 taluks of the State shared border with six neighbouring States. The objectives of the authority was to help build academic and social life in border areas and for that purpose, it had extended a grant of ₹5 crore for cultural programmes. He also stressed the need for reciprocating the action by neighbouring States and setting up such authorities for Kannada development in their States.

Delivering the keynote address, Basavalinga Swami of Akkalkot in Solapur district said that 90% of the people in Solapur-Akkalkot region used Kannada in their day-to-day interactions and for business. Referring to the demand for Belagavi by Maharashtra, he said the government and the people should oppose any such demand at the initial stage. Eshwar Alevoor spoke on the contribution of Kannadigas residing outside the State in building Kannada, while S. Raghunath spoke on the possibilities of linguistic harmony in border areas.

From Page One

CM announces panel

On the need for making mother tongue compulsory in primary education, the Chief Minister said that there was a need for constitutional protection for all mother tongues in this regard. And to find a solution to the issue, steps would be taken to ensure that the concerns regarding the mother tongues reached the Union government, he said.

Mr. Bommai also announced extending pension to all those who took part in the unification movement but are residing outside the State.

Mr. Bommai said that he would also announce a grant of ₹3 crore to Haveri as "sammelana gift" for building a district office of Kannada Sahitya Parishat and for setting up research centre on North Karnataka dialects.

Veteran journalist dead

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

K. Sathyanarayana

Veteran journalist K. Sathyanarayana passed away in Bengaluru on Sunday. He was 82. He is survived by wife and a daughter.

His journalistic career had spanned over six decades. He had begun his career in *Thaayinadu* in the 50s and then joined *Kannada Prabha* where he worked for over three decades. He had worked as editor of *Kannada Prabha* and *Indian Express*.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, former Chief Ministers Siddaramaiah, H.D. Kumaraswamy and B.S. Yediyurappa, and KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar have condoled his death.

CORRIDORS OF POWER

Heggade in Kambala film

Padma Vibhushan D. Veerendra Heggade *(in picture)*, Rajya Sabha MP and Dharmadhikari of Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala

Manjunatha Swamy Temple, is donning greasepaint for a small role in the upcoming movie *Veera Kambala*. It will be released in April in Tulu and Kannada.

The movie is based on the traditional Kambala race, annual buffalo race held in the coastal Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts. The sport is an integral part of the Tulu-speaking people's culture. Generally, Kambala season starts in November and lasts until April.

Sources said that Dr. Heggade, who turned 75 recently, is playing a two-minute role as a judge in deciding the winner when there is a tie between two competing teams in the Kambala race.

Rajendra Singh Babu has directed the film. The Dharmadhikari, who had appeared in the television show *Weekend with Ramesh* in 2019, recently watched the blockbuster *Kantara* in Mangaluru with family members. Kambala was featured in *Kantara* too.

Divided over name

The political class in Karnataka is divided on naming the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway (NH 275). Pratap Simha *(in picture)*,

BJP MP, met Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari and asked him to name the new expressway as Cauvery Expressway, along the lines of Ganga Expressway and Yamuna Expressway in Uttar Pradesh. The river is considered as the lifeline of the Old Mysore region.

Veteran leader and former Chief Minister S.M. Krishna, who annunced his retirement from politics, has urged the government to name the newly constructed highway after Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar, who ruled the erstwhile Mysore kingdom between 1902 to 1940. Businessman and JD(S) leader T.A. Sharavana met Mr. Gadkari and suggested to name the highway after former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda.

As the State Assembly elections are scheduled in April-May, it would be interesting to watch the BJP government's final pick of name.

Nagesh Prabhu
Suchith Kidiyoor

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(THROUGH E-PROCUREMENT MODE ONLY)

KPTCL invites bid against enquiry No. **KPTCL/SEE/Tr(M)/BMAZ(S)/EE(O)/AEE-1/2022-23/EPR-58 Dated : 07.01.2023** for Supply of Safety Belts for use at Stations in various TL&SS Divisions pertaining to BMAZ South Circle, KPTCL, Bangalore.

The bids will be received through E-Procurement mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject tenders can be got by logging on to **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink 'e-Procurement-KPTCL' or to **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **09.01.2023**

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The general public are hereby informed that my client intends to purchase the property morefully described in the schedule hereunder from its present owner, **MRS. K. SAILAJA REDDY,** wife of Mr. K. Vinod Reddy, residing at No. 223, 7th Main, Sadanandanagar, NGEF Layout, Bengaluru-560038, she having acquired title to the same under a Sale Deed dated 02.05.2008 registered as Document No. 105/2008-09, Book-I, stored in C.D. No.INRD2, in the office of the Senior Sub-Registrar, Indiranagar, Bangalore.

All persons /firms /companies /banks /financial institutions having or claiming any right, title, estate or interest by way of inheritance, share, sale, mortgage, transfer, lease, tenancy, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, devise, bequest, exchange, pre-emption, possession or encumbrance or otherwise howsoever into or upon the Schedule Property herein below described, are called upon to intimate the same in writing to the undersigned, at the below given address, along with all the documents relating to such claim, within **14 days** from the date of publication of this notice, failing which any such claim of any party shall be deemed to have been waived for all legal practical purposes, and shall not be entertained hereafter and I shall opine that the Schedule Property is free of any claims and my client will be free to proceed with the proposed purchase of the Schedule Property.

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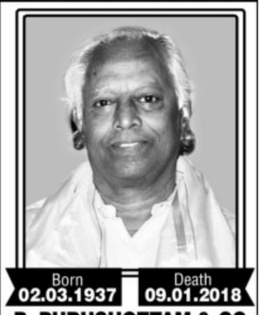
Place: Bengaluru Date: 08.01.2023

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

5TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY



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DONATE EYES GIFT SIGHT

Cast away, 14 fishermen survived on coconuts

Beulah Rose
MADURAI

When nine fishermen from Kerala and five from Tamil Nadu set out for fishing on November 27, 2022, they never thought that their lives would soon resemble that of Tom Hanks's character in *Cast Away*.

As on any other day, they had started from Thangapattinam in Kanniyakumari district after loading their boat, *Chrisha Mol* – owned by Varghese Raj from the neighbouring village of Eraviputhenthurai – packing rice and other staple ingredients that would last for 35 days. Acclimatised to deep-sea fishing, these fishermen usually stayed at sea for 25 days at a stretch.

But on December 4, when they were barely a week into their trip, *Chrisha Mol* developed a snag.

According to Chinnaiyan Vellaiyan, they were about five nautical miles from the shore when the gearbox broke down. For about three days, they were anchored at sea, before they were spotted by a Sri Lankan fishing boat.

Survival instinct: The rescued fishermen were brought to the Coast Guard station at Vizhinjam. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

With their help, the damaged gearbox was taken to the shore by one of the fishermen, for repairs.

In the meantime, due to inclement weather conditions at sea, the boat's anchor got cut and *Chrisha Mol* started to drift. Using a dinghy, the fishermen managed to reach Ile Anglaise, an atoll which is part of the Salomon Islands, which lies in the Chagos archipelago in the Indian Ocean south of the Maldives.

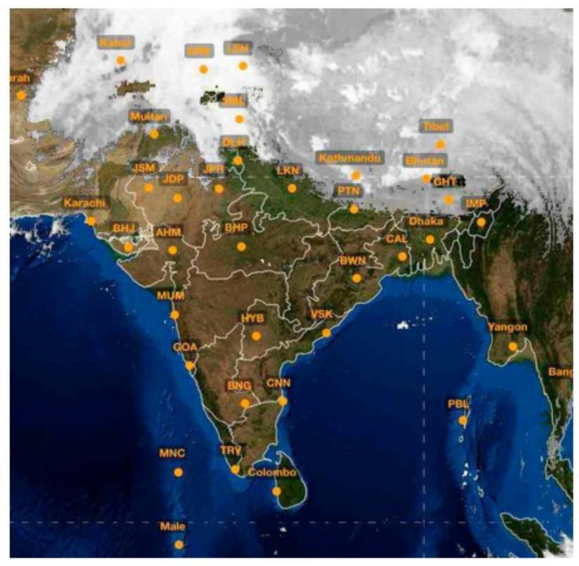
Using what they had in the boat, the stranded fishermen managed to cook rice using the saltwater. Though a deserted atoll, Ile Anglaise had numerous coconut trees. For 15 days, Mr. Vellaiyan said that they managed to slake their thirst by drinking coconut water and then by collecting rainwater as it rained frequently.

They had almost given up on being rescued until, on December 23, they were spotted by the OSV *Grampian Endurance*, a vessel sailing under the United Kingdom's flag. The fishermen were then handed over to the Indian Coast Guard when the British vessel passed off the Colachel coast on January 2.

Titus, one of the fishermen, is recuperating in an ayurvedic hospital due to extreme exposure to the sun, according to his wife. The rest of the crew, however, have returned to sea.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Dense to very dense fog likely in isolated pockets over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, north Rajasthan and Bihar

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	17.4	13.8	Kozhikode	—	34.0	23.6
Ahmedabad	—	28.4	16.7	Kurnool	—	30.6	17.2
Aizawl	—	—	10.5	Lucknow	—	13.6	4.1
Allahabad	—	19.4	3.2	Madurai	—	32.4	22.1
Bengaluru	—	26.2	17.0	Mangaluru	—	33.5	22.2
Bhopal	—	22.9	6.2	Mumbai	—	31.2	22.8
Bhubaneswar	—	27.4	10.5	Mysuru	—	28.0	15.2
Chandigarh	—	11.1	4.5	New Delhi	—	15.4	2.6
Chennai	0.1	29.6	22.7	Patna	—	—	7.8
Coimbatore	—	29.3	20.8	Port Blair	—	30.8	23.2
Dehradun	—	23.3	6.0	Puducherry	0.4	30.8	21.6
Gangtok	—	17.2	8.2	Pune	—	27.1	15.6
Goa	—	33.0	21.0	Raipur	—	26.0	5.5
Guwahati	—	27.0	10.7	Ranchi	—	22.7	10.0
Hubballi	—	28.0	14.0	Shillong	—	19.6	9.7
Hyderabad	—	28.7	12.8	Shimla	—	19.0	9.5
Imphal	—	25.8	7.3	Srinagar	—	7.5	-0.1
Jaipur	—	23.7	7.2	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.9	24.2
Kochi	—	31.6	23.6	Tiruchi	—	30.7	22.0
Kohima	—	19.2	7.2	Vijayawada	—	30.2	14.8
Kolkata	—	22.1	12.2	Visakhapatnam	—	28.3	18.3

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.43	101	.68	..90	...121	
Bengaluru	...7	..—	.61	...189	...122	
Chennai	.27	..53	.38	...294	...165	
Delhi	...6	..12	.58	...360	...491	
Hyderabad	...4	..10	.51	...206	.....—	
Kolkata	...8	..27	.48	...339	.....—	
Lucknow	.10	..73	110	...330	...331	
Mumbai	.39	..87	.50	...272	...170	
Pune	..—	..—	..—	.....—	.....—	
Visakhapatnam	..—	..54	.53	...185	...192	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Begusarai, Bihar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 420 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Maihar, Madhya Pradesh recorded a healthy AQI score of 21

Air Quality Code: Poor | Moderate | Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Sandalwood chips from Marayur Reserve priced at ₹350 a kg

Sandeep Vellaram
IDUKKI

The Marayur Sandalwood Division in Idukki, the only natural sandalwood reserve in Kerala, is introducing a new product. According to officials, the new product, 'sandal brisket', which is sandalwood chips, will be available soon. It will be the 16th sandalwood product from the reserve.

The reserve obtains nearly 30 tonnes to 50 tonnes of sandalwood white chips as by-product during the extraction process. Some Ayurvedic companies buy one to two tonnes of it for medicinal purposes and the rest get damaged within a year or two.

Divisional Forest Officer of the Marayoor Sandalwood Division, M.G. Vinod Kumar, said that the division had approached higher officials with a proposal. Following this, a government order was issued.

"The brisket is used primarily during cremation. The price has been fixed at ₹350 a kg of brisket," said Mr. Kumar. The new product will provide nearly ₹1 crore extra income to the State annually.

"The Marayur Sandal Division is the only natural sandal division in the country. The estimated worth of sandalwood trees in the division is ₹3,000 crore. Marayur sandalwood is renowned because it has more oil content in it," said a Forest Department official.

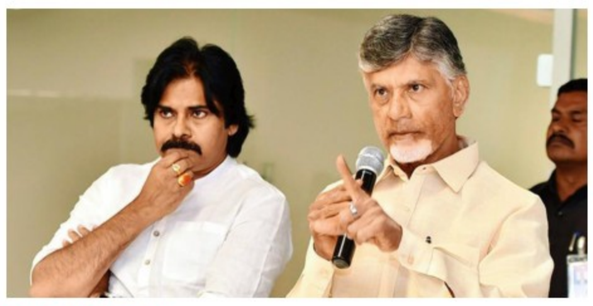
A.P. Opposition parties say govt. muffling their voice

Naidu, Pawan Kalyan flay Government Order; they allege that the order, which had banned public meetings and rallies on roads, was a conspiracy to prevent them from reaching out to masses

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

Telugu Desam Party president N. Chandrababu Naidu and Jana Sena Party (JSP) chief Pawan Kalyan reiterated the need for collective efforts to thwart the YSR Congress Party's alleged conspiracy to prevent the Opposition parties from reaching out to the masses on grounds of public safety by issuing Government Order Rt. No. 1 banning public meetings and rallies on roads.

They called the move anti-democratic and reflective of the "autocratic mindset" of Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.



Setting the stage: N. Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan at a press conference in Hyderabad on Sunday. NAGARA GOPAL

The situation prevalent in A.P. is worse than what one can see during an emergency. It is the responsibility of every individual to protect it, they said. Addressing presspersons after deliberating for over two hours, in Hyderabad on Sunday, Mr. Naidu said their focus was on ways to counter the "anti-people policies" of the government. He also criticised the manner in which the YSRCP was "silencing the critics", particularly leaders of the Opposition parties, with the "support of the police" who ought to stand up against the blatant violations of law.

Referring to the G.O., Mr. Naidu said its legal validity was doubtful but the police stopped him at Kuppam on the pretext of the curbs, as per a "premeditated plan, which was to obstruct his public meetings".

Mr. Kalyan said he called on Mr. Naidu to express support after denial of permission to visit Kuppam.

THE HINDU

EDUCATIONPLUS

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Move to a creative 'VUCA'

The curriculum of higher education institutions needs to look beyond digital literacy and focus on digital creativity

Jaskiran Arora

Today, with technology having permeated every sphere of our lives, the educational ecosystem is now taking cognisance of the compelling need to design a curriculum that makes students proficient in providing digitally enabled business solutions.

Digital literacy is more than just computer proficiency. It also involves critical thinking skills and the ability to connect and communicate. So, how can higher education institutions integrate digital creativity into the academic curriculum? This requires the conscious weaving of the following four aspects into the curriculum.

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Digital Intelligence

Though Computer Science has always been a very popular stream, today universities are embedding analytics-related courses in non-tech programmes like management and commerce. Progressive specialisations in Blockchain and Artificial Intelligence are not merely restricted to Computer Science students now. These technological perspectives are being embraced by other students to increase efficiency. Capstone projects like automating business processes using Blockchain and interdisciplinary courses and projects like Drones for Delivery, Metaverse, and Integrated Financial Networks are being added to programme structures for the Law, Management, and Humanities to help students gain diverse perspectives.

Creativity, Innovation and an Entrepreneurial Thinking

Designing credit courses like Accelerating Creativity and Innovation or Creative Thinking in the curriculum of different disciplines helps develop essential skills. Offering capsules on Growth Mindset vis-à-vis a Fixed mindset and Disruptive Innovation trains students to think out-of-the-box and helps ignite their imagination and promote entrepreneurial mindsets. This leads to enhanced customer focus and augmented business efficiencies.

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills

As the new world is unfolding, there is an increasing requirement for thinkers than doers. While most of the routine, repetitive jobs will be taken over by robot assistants, the humans will be expected to connect the dots and understand the story behind the data for strategic decision-making. And this will increasingly require employees with very high cognitive skills. Courses like Data Visualisation, Story Telling and Presentation skills, Case Analysis etc. are now becoming core courses in the curriculum to formally train the students on these cognitive skills, unlike in the past when such courses were offered only as electives. Not just the data descriptive courses, but predictive analytics courses like Analysis and Mitigation of Risk, Creative Problem Solving and Consulting, Critical Reasoning, and handling Black Swan events, are becoming an integral part of the curriculum.

Connect and Communicate

Last but not least is the ability to connect with people on digital platforms, understand their digital habits, and be empathic to their feelings so that one can reach out with the right product offering. The 'feel' and 'express' elements in education to formally prepare students for the digital world involves designing courses such as Emotional Intelligence and Personal Effectiveness, Creative Writing, Content Writing, and Behavioural Finance among others.

The right pedagogies are imperative in achieving the desired outcomes. Progressive universities are using more simulation- and project-based problem-solving approaches that not only train students for the immersive digital world but also make learning functional rather than declarative.

The industry is also becoming an integral part of both designing the curriculum and imparting knowledge to the students. Thus, the curriculum is set to change the definition from a 'Disruptive VUCA' (Volatile Uncertain Complex and Ambiguous) world to a 'Creative VUCA' (Visualising Unbounded Creativity and Application) world.

The writer is the Dean, School of Management, BML Munjal University.

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A timely halt

SC must lay down rehabilitation norms for eviction from public spaces

The Supreme Court's timely intervention has halted the forcible eviction of some 50,000 people from Haldwani in Uttarakhand, where the occupants are accused of squatting on railway property for decades. The Uttarakhand High Court had taken a tough stand against the residents, and passed a slew of directions that would have entailed their eviction within a week, backed by force, including the deployment of paramilitary forces. It is significant that the Bench underscored the human angle to the issue and spoke about the need for rehabilitation before eviction while staying the order. In an earlier round of litigation over the same land, which adjoins the Haldwani Railway Station, court orders had allowed proceedings against individual occupants under the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971, to be completed. This time, too, it was on a PIL that the High Court had passed its orders. The High Court's detailed judgment shows that the residents' claim is traceable to a 1907 Office Memorandum that says the area be managed under rules pertaining to 'nazul land'. The court has ruled that it was not a government order but only a communication on how to manage the land, and it does not amount to declaring it as 'nazul land', that is, land that has fallen into the hands of the state by escheat. As one of the nazul rules is that there cannot be sale or lease, the court rejected all claims made by occupants based on purported documents for lease, sale, and, in some cases, purchase through auction.

Conflicts between occupants of public land and the state that wants to reclaim the land are a never-ending saga in the country. A shortage of housing, as well as inadequate recognition of the right to shelter, means that large masses of people encroach on vacant land, be it on the bed of water bodies or government property. This often leads to attempts to evict the occupants and spawns litigation. Invariably, there are claims to occupancy rights based on long years of stay at the same location. There are court judgments that stress rehabilitation measures and consultation with the oustees before eviction. Some courts have also recorded the view that mandatory rehabilitation may prove to be an incentive for encroachment. The Haldwani eviction effort has unfortunately taken communal overtones, and there appears to be a clamour for the early eviction of the Muslim residents. India does not have a good record on rehabilitation of those evicted from public spaces, and this case presents an opportunity to the Supreme Court to lay down the law on meaningful rehabilitation as well as effective prevention of encroachments.

Tame, not lame

In a democracy, no one can overlook the cultural sensitivity of the people

Come Pongal and many parts of Tamil Nadu are alive with preparations for jallikattu, a traditional sport involving bulls. On December 8, a five-member Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas challenging the Tamil Nadu law allowing jallikattu. The court is expected to give its judgment before the commencement of this year's event, which goes on for nearly four months in various parts. It is likely to rule on the validity of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act, 2017, which does not talk of the "taming of bulls" while giving legal sanction to jallikattu. Though the traditional sport was not allowed for a few years thanks to the apex court's ruling in May 2014, the demand for its revival assumed serious proportions soon after the death of Chief Minister Jayalalithaa in December 2016. As the court had declared void the Tamil Nadu Regulation of Jallikattu Act, 2009, which referred to the "taming of bulls", the framers of the 2017 law defined jallikattu as "an event involving bulls conducted with a view to follow tradition and culture". On hearing petitions against the latest law, the court had sought to address the questions of whether jallikattu should be granted constitutional protection as a collective cultural right under Article 29 (1); and whether the 2017 law and rules "perpetuate cruelty to animals" or were a means to ensure "the survival and well-being of the native breeds of bulls".

In a democracy, no one can overlook the cultural sensitivity of the people. Six years ago, the perception that those in power, both at the Centre and in the State, did not respect this factor gained ground, compelling the Union and the State governments to come up with a State-specific amendment to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, a Central law. The amendment, allowing the event subject to rules and regulations, had ended the crisis that had engulfed the State then in the wake of a huge assembly of people on the Marina Beach for days together. But the revised law, by itself, could not ensure that no human lives were lost, let alone prevent instances of torture to the animal. There is a need to reinforce stricter enforcement of regulations. Also, the bureaucracy should sensitise local communities to the need for the safe and smooth conduct of jallikattu. Every traditional practice undergoes changes over time and jallikattu is no exception to this rule. This message should be conveyed forcefully to all the stakeholders.

Avoid further delay in conducting the Census

In February 1961, I was in primary school. I still remember the visit of the Census enumerator to our house. Fondly called Pachu Pillai, he was a teacher in our school and a family friend. Since many teachers were on Census duty, we (though not the entire school) got a couple of days off. Next year I waited for the Census enumerator to visit our house and was told that the exercise takes place every 10 years.

K. Narayanan Unni

is retired from Indian Statistical Service. He was Deputy Registrar General and a member of the Advisory Committee for the 2011 and 2021 Censuses. Email: knunni@gmail.com

Freezing of administration boundaries

Recently, this newspaper reported that the freezing of administrative boundaries that precedes the Census would be done with effect from July 1, 2023. Such a freezing is necessary as State governments are in the habit of creating new districts and tehsils or reorganising existing ones. If such changes happen during a Census, there would be chaos in the field as to who should oversee such areas and a likelihood of some areas being left out of the Census. House-listing operations take about a month, but were traditionally taken up in various States at different points of time between March and September of the year prior to the Census. It is not clear whether the government is planning to synchronise the house-listing operations to reduce the interval between the freezing of boundaries and the actual Census enumeration. There is no official statement yet about when the Census would be conducted.

When restrictions were imposed to contain the pandemic in March 2020, several States in the country were on the threshold of starting house-listing operations. Enumerators were appointed and trained, questionnaires were printed, mobile applications were ready for use by willing enumerators and other logistic arrangements were in place. But the pandemic ensured that the house-listing and, consequently, the population enumeration phase were postponed. Two years have been lost. There is no reason for a further postponement.

> The Census alone can provide population data for every village and town, data for the delimitation of constituencies and for determining the quantum of reservation, and validate or reject estimates

M.BALAJI

The Constitution talks about the use of Census data for delimitation of constituencies and for determining the quantum of reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. However, it does not say what should be the periodicity of the census. The Census Act, 1948, which predates the Constitution, provides the legal background for several activities relating to the Census without mentioning anything about its periodicity. It says, "The Central Government may,... declare its intention of taking a census..., whenever it may consider it necessary or desirable so to do, and thereupon the census shall be taken". This provision puts the onus of deciding when to conduct a Census on the executive. This is unlike the position in several countries such as the U.S. and Japan where the Constitution or the Census law mandates a Census with defined periodicity.

Implications of the delay

The Census alone can provide population data for every village and town in the country. Sample surveys can provide reliable data on social and demographic indicators only at higher geographic levels. Apart from the population count, the Census has also been providing data on population characteristics, housing and amenities.

We have population projections at the State and national level that have been fairly accurate in the past. However, it is not feasible to get reliable projections at lower geographic levels such as for districts and cities or even small States and Union Territories. For answers to questions on the improvement in literacy and educational levels, economic activity, migration, etc., or the impact of programmes like Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, one must depend on sample surveys. But these surveys have limitations and cannot be used to find answers to how many villages have literacy rates below 75% or which tehsils have a low percentage of people getting protected water supply. Such information is important to initiate action to rectify the situation.

The Census data are used to determine the number of seats to be reserved for SCs and STs in Parliament, State legislatures, local bodies, and government services. In case of panchayats and municipal bodies, reservation of seats for SCs and STs is based on their proportion in the population. Other than the Census, there is no other source that can provide this information. Delay in the Census means that the data from the 2011 Census would continue to be used. In many towns and even panchayats that have seen rapid changes in the composition of their population over the last decade, this would mean that either too many or too few seats are being reserved. Delimitation of parliamentary and Assembly constituencies would continue to be based on 2001 Census till data from a Census after 2026 are published.

The rural-urban distribution of population has been rapidly changing over the years. There is high population growth in the urban areas. Some cities have been growing faster than others through in-migration. The rural-urban distribution of population has been rapidly changing over the years. There is high population growth in the urban areas. Some cities have been growing faster than others through in-migration. For example, areas under the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike grew by 49.3% during 2001-11, while the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (11.9%), the Delhi Municipal Corporation (11.7%), and Greater Chennai Corporation (7.0%) had much lower growth rates. Kolkata Municipal Corporation recorded a fall in population during the same period.

The pandemic resulted in deaths among adults and the aged relatively more than children. Its impact on age distribution in severely affected areas would be of interest as it would give an indirect estimates of the number of deaths. This would either validate or reject the various estimates of the number of deaths due to the pandemic.

Census and NPR

The decision to collect data for the National Population Register by piggybacking on the Census operations was the most debated issue before the Census was postponed. Such controversies negatively impact the Census, which is the largest administrative exercise for collecting data. The Census is a single-shot operation and there is no scope for a retake. The Central government's stated stand is that the data for the National Population Register would be updated during the Census. As the Census has been considerably delayed, it would be advisable to separate these two and disassociate the Census from a politically sensitive issue. This would help complete the Census as early as possible and maintain reliability of data.

The first Census after 2026 would be used for delimitation of parliamentary and Assembly constituencies and for apportionment of parliamentary seats among the States. Due to the disparity in growth rates between the States, there could be changes in the distribution of seats in Parliament. That Census is likely to be held in a more politically charged atmosphere. Hence, it is necessary that this Census is done as early as possible.

Imagining the politics of fraternity

As the Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Yatra, which is passing through Haryana now, is scheduled to make its way towards Srinagar in another 10 days or so in the punishing north Indian winter, it is fair to ask what it has achieved. From the outset, it was made clear that although the yatra was a political undertaking, it did not have an electoral motive. However, the yatra has succeeded in the important task of imagining and inaugurating a political counterculture grounded on the principle of fraternity or Bandhutva. Here, it is important to underline that in the eyes of our nation's founders, fraternity was not merely a value to aspire to, but a foundational principle to be upheld by all the political forces; hence, it was included in the Preamble as well as in the fundamental duties of our Constitution.

Anshul Trivedi

is a member of the Congress party and a Bharat Yatri. Twitter: @anshultrivedi47

The emergence of the principle of fraternity

Since the emergence of the modern nation state, the values of liberty, equality and fraternity have been the touchstone of all democratic projects across the world. However, these values have been articulated and interpreted differently within specific historical and political contexts. Interestingly, although the values of liberty and equality have been given abundant philosophical and political attention, fraternity remains undertheorised and seldom invoked.

Traditionally there were two ideas of fraternity. The first emerged from the Judeo-Christian world view which envisaged a brotherhood among men owing to the belief that all men were 'children of God'. The second more radical and secular idea of fraternity was born out of the crucible of the French Revolution. Here, fraternity denoted a sense of solidarity and brotherhood among those who were opposed to the tyrannical monarchical order. This idea became the basis of modern citizenship.

> The Bharat Jodo Yatra has succeeded in the important task of imagining and inaugurating a political counterculture grounded on the principle of fraternity

The Indian context

In the Indian context, Bandhutva emerged during the process of anti-colonial struggle and the concomitant process of nation-building. The most ardent champion of Bandhutva was Dr. B. R. Ambedkar. He was deeply disturbed by the absence of 'public conscience' or empathy among the Hindus for their fellow human beings who were subjected to the degrading practice of untouchability. He rightly argued that the absence of fraternity, owing to caste consciousness within Hindu society, was the primary reason for the colonisation of India and the chief impediment in nation-building.

In *The Buddha and his Dhamma*, he argued that any society which sanctioned the supremacy of one group over the other is bound to have perpetual conflict. The only way to resolve this conflict is to make fraternity universally effective. For Ambedkar, fraternity was the fundamental enabling condition for the realisation of liberty and equality, which would otherwise merely be 'coats of paint'.

Therefore, he warned the Constituent Assembly that India could be held together not merely by laws but by a feeling of brotherhood among the people. If the political class failed to popularise the values of equality and fraternity among the people, India's freedom would be imperilled once more. In fact, so important was Bandhutva to safeguard the moral order of the nation – and humanity at large – that he anchored it within the Navayana Buddhist tradition before embracing it; thereby, elevating it from the realm of the secular to the sacred.

Satyagraha for Bandhutva against Hindutva

We are living in an age of extreme inequality. Across the world, the principle of fraternity is threatened by the political culture spawned by extreme social and economic polarisation with one enabling the other. As a result, we see xenophobia and racial tensions rear their ugly head. In India, the Narendra Modi regime is the primary vehicle of such a politics of polarisation and Hindutva is its principal source of ideological legitimation.

It is not as if caste or communal violence was absent earlier; however, what has changed is the political patronage extended to the perpetrators of such violence by this regime. The cases of Bilkis Bano, Afrazul, Kathua, Hathras and Unnao or the use of violent hate speech are painful reminders of such a politics. On the economic front, the top 1% have cornered more than 40% of the wealth in 2021; while the poor and middle classes struggle with inflation. Such a politics threatens to tear apart our social fabric.

In such a context, Mr. Gandhi is safeguarding the principle of fraternity by reintroducing the language of *ahimsa* (non-violence), *nirbhayta* (fearlessness), *samata* (equality) and *samvaad* (dialogue) in the political discourse and reinforcing our common humanity. This is nothing new, as these were the very principles which guided our nation during our freedom struggle. While there have been many important mass campaigns to uphold and expand liberty and equality since Independence, this is the biggest mass campaign to defend and entrench fraternity in Independent India. This is a duty considered sacred by Ambedkar.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Food safety

The incident points to the callous attitude of our food safety authorities. Many eateries operate in unhygienic conditions and put to risk the health of their customers. ("Food-borne deaths trigger concern; raids at eateries," Jan. 8). Instead of reacting in a knee-jerk manner after such incidents, it is the duty of the Food Safety Department to regularly monitor the hygienic status of all food outlets and make sure that they adhere to the stringent norms prescribed. Punitive action must be taken against those violating safety rules.

Biju C. Mathew
Thiruvananthapuram

The land of Tamils

It has become a regular phenomenon for political parties in Tamil Nadu to find fault with every statement of Governor R.N. Ravi ("Political leaders disapprove of Governor's 'Thamizhagam' remark," Jan. 7). The word Thamizhagam is extensively used in *Purananooru, Silapadikaram, Manimekalai,* etc. Even Periyar used it. When there are so many important issues facing the State, it is unclear why our leaders make a hue and cry over such trivial issues.

R.Pichumani
Thanjavur

The face of Congress

There is no doubt that one of the main beneficiaries of the Bharat Jodo Yatra is going to be Rahul Gandhi ("Yatra is not to project Rahul as PM face for 2024 election: Jairam," Jan. 7). His stock is certain to soar after the completion of the yatra if the massive crowds everywhere are of any indication. Although Mallikarjun Kharge is now the party president, it is clear that Mr. Gandhi remains the face of the party. Nitish Kumar too had said a few days ago that he has no problem seeing Mr. Gandhi as Prime Minister. However, parties such as the Trinamool Congress and the Bharat Rashtra Samiti might not be willing to do business with the Congress.

C.V. Aravind
Chennai

Another extension

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2019 has obviously become a hard nut to crack for the Home Ministry ("Home Ministry seeks another six-month extension to frame rules related to Citizenship Act," Jan. 8). Seeking another extension of six months, which is the seventh extension, says a lot. Perhaps the Centre wanted to keep the issue on the back burner realising in hindsight the pernicious impact the law would make on our polity. It is hoped that the Centre will revisit the egregious Act that discriminates against people on religious lines.

Ayyasseri Raveendranath
Aranmula

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Making healthy choice the easier choice

Anand Krishnan

is Professor at Centre for Community Medicine, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi

Do you eat five servings (400-500 grams) of fruits and vegetables or do 30 minutes of physical activity in a day? Chances are that you do not. Do not worry, you are not alone in not doing so. The 2017-18 National NCD monitoring survey reported that 98% of Indians do not take adequate fruits and vegetables and only 59% of adults do adequate physical activity.

So why are we not making the right choices? Often the reason given is that people do not pay enough importance to health and choose to eat unhealthy due to taste and cost considerations or are simply too lazy to take that walk or go to the gym. In other words, individuals fail in making the right choices and are at fault. But are these individual choices? I believe that these choices are heavily influenced by the environment we live in.

More choices

I can no longer eat a full thali in any of the restaurants and yet I am forced to do so as there is no choice. Restaurants find large portions to be more lucrative. Finding a snack which is neither fried nor salty in a restaurant is nearly impossible. We need more choices for people to be able to eat healthy without compromising the choices for others. We know that food choices in families are now driven by children who are heavily influenced by food marketing on television or by inducements like toys. Surveys have shown that unhealthier choices are available more, priced lower and displayed more prominently in grocery stores to promote their buying.

There are two main reasons that most of us do not eat sufficient fruits and vegetables—culturally our diet is so cereal/pulse–based (due to the historical need to address undernutrition) that scope for adding these is limited. More importantly, it is an affordability issue. So, our food environment is configured in a way that promotes unhealthy options and dissuades healthy choices.

Now, let us understand why our intention to walk or exercise does not convert into actual practice. It is always desirable to pursue physical activities that are integrated into our daily work, including household work, walking to the office, market, or bus top, taking stairs over lifts and morning walks. However, we do not do it as we have many barriers to walking in our environment—air pollution, weather (hot-cold-rains), unusable footpaths, lack of parks or, when available, often unsafe and poorly lit. Socio-cultural barriers are equally important, especially for women not being able to do physical activity—their role within the house.

Thus, physical, economic, and socio–cultural environments in which we make decisions about purchasing, preparing and consuming food or doing physical activity are unsupportive of healthy choices. Can these environments be shaped differently? Yes, there is sufficient evidence globally that there are many policy–level interventions that help create an enabling environment. These include regulatory, fiscal instruments as well as structural and educational interventions.

Multiple fixes

The regulatory approach is best exemplified by regulating the marketing of foods to children. Many countries have banned or restricted the advertising of food and beverages to children on television—food companies cannot advertise on children's channels or at times when they watch television. Regulating salt content in butter, cheese, chips etc. is another area for regulation. India is currently exploring front–of–pack food labelling by self–regulation by industry. Self-regulation has not really worked globally and is just a delaying tactic by the industry.

Given that affordability is an important consideration for eating healthy, fiscal measures have an important role. Some examples are taxing junk food, incentivising healthier options and subsiding fruits and vegetables.

Laying more footpaths, making them walkable by having them low, keeping them clean, removing obstructions and maintaining parks etc. are doable interventions by municipalities.

Commercial interests

Commercial interests like the food industry are powerful interest groups. They would oppose interventions aimed at labelling or reducing salt or sugar. While we need to engage with the industry, we must also learn to insulate these decisions from their influence.

Along with improving awareness of people about making healthy choices, we also need to educate relevant stakeholders. Working with restaurants to promote healthier preparation of food—preventing multiple reheating of oils, lower oil, salt, and sugar use during preparation, and making available small portions are some examples.

India has not really explored these multifaceted policy interventions to address issues of diet and physical activity choices. We have used similar approaches effectively in modifying other behaviours like promoting safer sex, use of toilets. Many best practices exist globally which need to be synthesised and shared with policy makers. Even within the public health fraternity, there is a need for building capacity in planning, implementing, and evaluating these interventions. Ultimately, to make healthier choices easier for people, policymakers must exercise difficult choices. Sufficient momentum needs to be built for these interventions to be part of policymakers' weaponry. Also, if more people opt for healthy choices, then the industry will be forced to respond to keep its market share.

Evidence, globally, suggests that policy level interventions can help people make healthier choices in life

A participatory mapping exercise

Buffer zone mapping should be inclusive and involve local inhabitants

STATE OF PLAY

Srikumar Chattopadhyay

The demarcation of a 1-km buffer zone around the protected forests in Kerala on the direction of the Supreme Court has raised serious concerns in society. While the creation and maintenance of buffer zones around ecologically sensitive areas are considered essential, the exercise is often beset by a paucity of reliable ground-level data. In its special report on Climate Change and Land-Summary for Policy Makers (2019), the International Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) stressed on improving sustainable land management 'by increasing the availability and accessibility of data' and termed it one of the near-term actions to address the issue of climate change and adaptation. However, micro-level land use statistics in Kerala, or for that matter of the entire country, is mostly conjectural with marginal ground input.

According to official statistics, Kerala has 11,525 km^2, or 29.7% of its total geographical area under forest cover. The category of dense and degraded forest accounts for 78.7% of the total forest area. The rest of the area is allotted for forest plantations, leased to other departments or used to accommodate other non-forest activities. Protected forests cover 26.6% of the total forest area and a 1-km buffer zone is proposed around these protected forest areas. Due to the dominance of tree crops and plantations like rubber, there are technical limitations in isolating natural forest vegetation using satellite images at a finer scale. This is evident from the report of the Forest Survey of India (2021), according to

which Kerala has 21,253km^2 or 54.7% of the total area under forest. The difference in figures has arisen because of the inclusion of plantations.

The mismatch between the area under forest and the area under actual natural vegetation cover was highlighted in the early 1980s when the Centre for Earth Science Studies brought out a report on deforestation in Kerala. Forest areas are being used for various non-forestry purposes, including the expansion of human settlements, leading to the fragmentation of forest patches. The forest-settlement boundary is pushed deep into the Western Ghats, exposing trails of wildlife movement, and aggravating human-wildlife conflicts. In 2021, there were instances of 8,107 human-wildlife conflicts.

Fixing the boundary between natural forest vegetation and humanised landscape is necessary. It warrants a detailed land use survey on a cadastral scale at the plot level. Participation of local people is imperative. Such an exercise was first attempted in the U.K. where students provided the bulk of the manpower. The entire country was covered through plot level-land use survey from 1928 to 1932 under the leadership of Sir Dudley Stamp of Department of Geography, London School of Economics. This survey vastly improved the land use statistics of U.K. The same exercise was repeated in the 1960s.

Kerala experimented with plot-level land use documentation in 1975. However, being a departmental exercise, the data were not assimilated to the desired level.

In 1991, the Centre for Earth Science Studies, in collaboration with the Kerala State Land Use Board, and the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad introduced participatory panchayat resource mapping in the State. The programme envisaged land use and asset mapping on a cadastral scale by trained local volunteers. Subject experts were involved in mapping land and water resources and assimilating the data through environmental appraisal. All the panchayats in the State were covered.

Specific requirements

In the present context of buffer zone mapping, the requirement is specific. Land use and asset survey are necessary for 115 panchayats bordering the protected forests. It is not possible for the government department to complete the task in a reasonable time frame. Drawing from past experiences, local panchayat and residents can be mobilised to undertake the programme. Students from schools and colleges, along with teachers can be involved. Scientific institutes and departments may be mandated to extend technical support. The entire database will be on a digital platform and be made available to the public. This could perhaps help in a big way in resolving conflicts. Similar exercises will be required to preserve the ecosystem. The ownership of the maps and local action must rest with the local inhabitants.

The author is a (Retd) Scientist, Centre for Earth Science Studies, Thiruvananthapuram

Younger diabetics are on the rise in most States

In more than 20 States, the share of young persons with high blood glucose levels increased in the last five years

DATA POINT

Rebecca Rose Varghese
Vignesh Radhakrishnan

In five States – West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa and Tripura – more than 8% of men aged below 35 had a random blood glucose level higher than 140 milligrams per decilitre (mg/dl), according to the National Family Health Survey-5 conducted between 2019 and 2021. The trend holds true for women aged below 35 in West Bengal and Tripura as well.

Not only was the share higher in these States, the increase from 2015-16 (NFHS-4) was also considerable. In West Bengal, the share of men aged below 35 with high blood glucose level increased by 2.6% in the five-year period. Among the women, the increase was even higher at 3%. Among the men in Tripura, the increase was much higher at 5.6% and among women, it was 3.5%.

The NFHS classified an individual as having high blood glucose if the random blood glucose level was above 140 mg/dl. Less than 140 was considered normal. The high glucose level is used to identify patients who are potentially diabetic. However, further tests have to be conducted to confirm the diagnosis.

While the share of young people with high blood glucose levels was alarming in the above-mentioned States, the rest of India was not far behind. In the southern States of Tamil Nadu and Telangana, the north-eastern States of Assam, Meghalaya, Sikkim and Mizoram, and Gujarat and Odisha, the share of young men with high blood glucose levels crossed 6% in 2019-21.

In 20 out of the 29 States analysed, the share of such young men increased. Of the nine States where the share decreased, Kerala's decline was notable. From 8.8% young men with high blood glucose level in 2015-16, the share reduced to 3.9% in 2019-21. Among women, an increase was observed in 21 States. Chart 1A plots the share of men aged below 35 whose random blood glucose levels were high in 2019-21 (vertical axis), against the increase in the share compared to 2015-16 (horizontal axis). Chart 1B plots the same for young women.

Young women in general had lower blood glucose levels than men. Except in West Bengal and Tripura, in other States the share of such young women was less than 6% in 2019-21. The increase from 2015-16 was also relatively muted compared to young men.

The above conclusions consider people aged between 15 and 34. If only those in their thirties are considered, the share of potentially diabetic young persons were much higher. Close to 9% of Indian women in their thirties were either on medication to control diabetes or had a high random blood glucose level in 2019-21. And the figure for men was even higher at 11.3%.

Most of the trends observed among the younger population holds true even if we include the older age-groups. Chart 2A plots the share of men aged between 15-54 whose random blood glucose levels were high in 2019-21 (vertical axis), against the increase in the share compared to 2015-16 (horizontal axis). Chart 2B plots the same for women aged 15-49.

As can be observed from charts 2A and 2B, Indian women in general are less susceptible to diabetes than men. The number of men with a high random blood glucose level was relatively higher in Goa, West Bengal, Tripura and the southern States of Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Telangana. This was closely followed by Uttarakhand, Odisha and the north-eastern States of Meghalaya, Assam and Mizoram. The trend mostly holds true among women too. So, in general, diabetic incidence is higher in the eastern, north-eastern and southern States.

Link between age, gender & diabetes

The charts are based on data collated from the National Famil Health Survey-5 (2019 -21) and National Family Health Survey-4 (2015-16)

South North East West Central Northeast

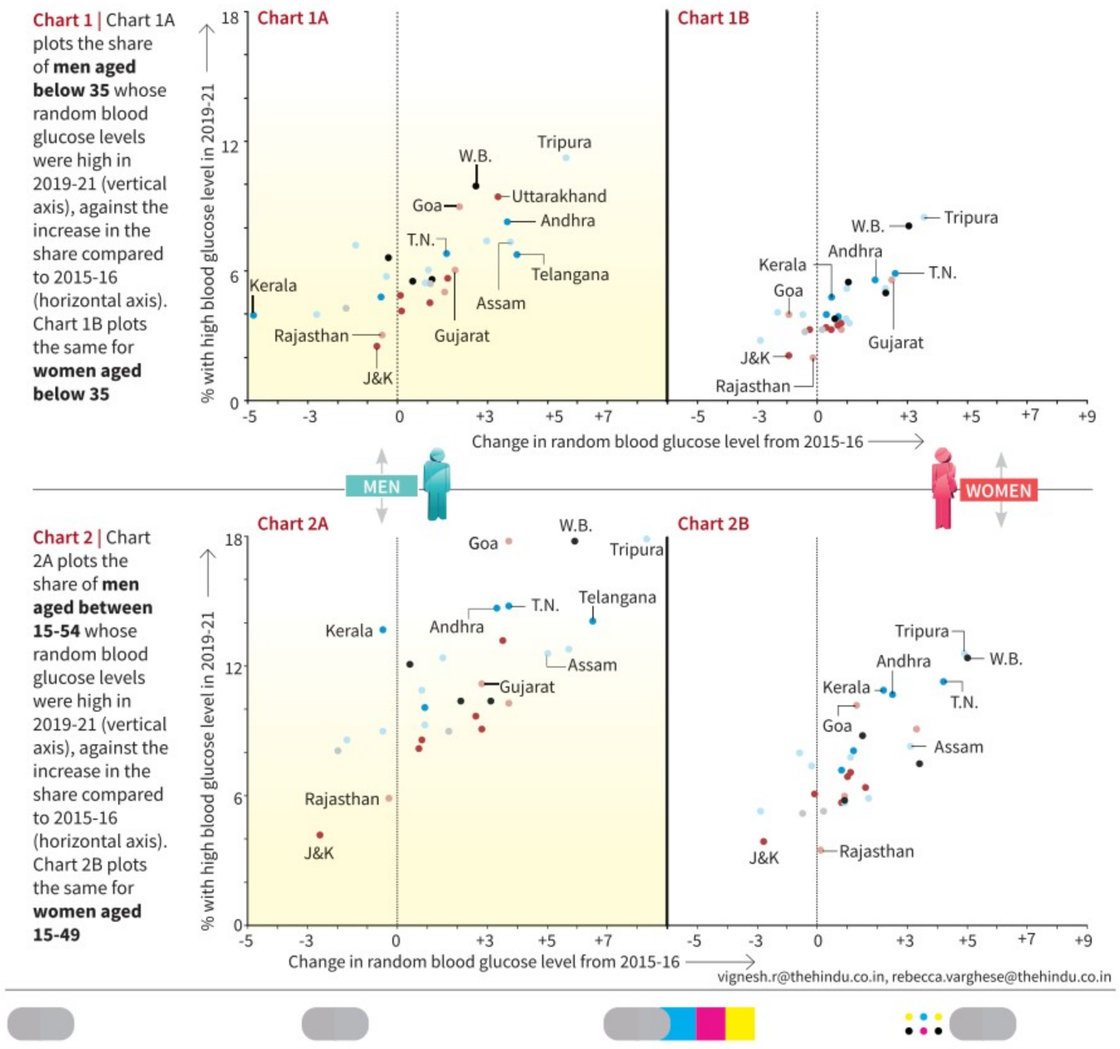

Chart 1 | Chart 1A plots the share of **men aged below 35** whose random blood glucose levels were high in 2019-21 (vertical axis), against the increase in the share compared to 2015-16 (horizontal axis). Chart 1B plots the same for **women aged below 35**

Chart 2 | Chart 2A plots the share of **men aged between 15-54** whose random blood glucose levels were high in 2019-21 (vertical axis), against the increase in the share compared to 2015-16 (horizontal axis). Chart 2B plots the same for **women aged 15-49**

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FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 9, 1973

Waldheim in sub-continent to discuss 'political problem'

United Nations, Jan. 9.

The U.N. Secretary-General, Dr. Kurt Waldheim, said today that during his visit to the Indian sub-continent early in February, he would discuss the "political problem" with the leaders of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

"We were not able to solve some the humanitarian problems but the main political issue is still open," he said. "My purpose is to discuss the political problem with the leaders of the three countries and I hope I will be able to contribute to progress in this field."

Dr. Waldheim made only brief references to the sub-continent, West Asia and admission of the two German states into the United Nations during the one-hour press conference and most of the time was devoted to replying to questions on Vietnam.

On Vietnam, he expressed the hope that the negotiations, which had been resumed in Paris between the U.S. Presidential Adviser, Dr. Henry Kissinger, and North Vietnam's Le Duc Tho, would lead to a successful conclusion.

Dr. Waldheim confirmed that he was in touch with Hanoi "through private channel."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 9, 1923

Bombay Police

(ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA) Bombay, Jan.8.

In forwarding the Police Inspector-General's report of the Bombay Presidency the Director of Information says that the outstanding feature of the year 1922 was large increase in serious crime specially in violent crime, against person and property.

General contempt for law and order fostered by the Non-Co-operation movement which reached its zenith in the year under report, the pre-occupations in certain districts general spirit of unrest in industrial world which was turned to full advantage by political agitators and withdrawal of large number of police from their normal duties in connection with two Royal visits are among the reasons to which this increase may be attributed. Moreover, in addition to increased activity of criminal classes, members of the police force had to face an intensive campaign directed specifically against them as servants of Government and maintainers of law and order.

From Page One

PMO reviews situation in Joshimath town

According to an official statement from the PMO, Uttarakhand Chief Secretary S.S. Sandhu informed the review meeting that after a ground-level assessment, it was determined that a strip of land around 350 metres wide had been affected.

The PM's Principal Secretary, P.K. Mishra, stressed that the immediate priorities for the State should be the safety of people living in the affected area. A team of the National Disaster Response Force and four of the State Disaster Response Force have reached Joshimath, where the district administration is working with the affected families to evacuate and relocate them to safer places with adequate arrangements for food, shelter and security.

Atul Sati, convener of the Joshimath Bachao Sangharsh Samiti which is leading the residents' protest, said the government only stopped the development project when the town was on the brink of disaster. "We had warned years back that NTPC's work is going to get this town to sink. No one paid heed. Look at the situation of Joshimath now," he said.

Putting equal onus on the construction of the Helang-Marwari bypass by the Border Roads Organisation, Dinesh Chaudhary, a shopkeeper in Sunil village of the Joshimath region, said that merely halting the projects would not help. "The government must put a full stop on the NTPC and BRO projects. Only then Joshimath will be saved," he said.

The residents of Joshimath, also known as the gateway town to the Badrinath temple, said they had been complaining to the government about cracks in their houses for over a year now. However, the administration became active only after its own building started developing cracks. In fact, now even roads and rocks on trekking routes have visible fractures.

Dehradun-based social activist Anoop Nautiyal alleged that the Chamoli district administration had only managed to evacuate 68 families in a week and make temporary rehabilitation arrangements for 1,271 people. He said the slow pace at which the administration was working on evacuation and rehabilitation was not enough in this "time of emergency". "On January 4, the administration had space for rehabilitation of 385 people. Five days after the rescue operations started, allegedly on a war-footing, the administration, till January 8, was able to manage to create space for rehabilitation of 1,271 people. This figure is not even 6% of the total population of Joshimath," Mr. Nautiyal said.

According to the 2011 Census, Joshimath has a population of over 16,000 people. Administrative officials say the town currently has over 20,000 people living here. Chamoli's Additional District Magistrate Abhishek Tripathi said the administration had asked NTPC and Hindustan Construction Company to each make temporary arrangements for the rehabilitation of 2,000 residents. "We will rehabilitate people in Pipalkothi, 35 km from Joshimath, if need be," he added.

Former Uttarakhand Chief Minister Harish Rawat, who visited the area, asked people to vacate their houses if they were damaged.

In the PMO meeting, it was decided that all four members of the NDMA and the Border Management Secretary would visit Joshimath on January 9 to assess the findings of technical teams and advise the State government on short and long-term actions. "Residents are being informed of the developments and their cooperation is being sought. Advice of experts is being sought to formulate the short-medium-long term plans," it said.

'Fake' Indian medicines in China's black market

While there has been no evidence of the fake versions causing harm so far, experts are concerned as they are ineffective against the virus and could end up resulting in patients not seeking treatment. Paxlovid has been made available through government clinics, but has been in limited supply. Sales are also highly regulated, with doctors evaluating patients' need for the drug and largely limiting it to senior citizens.

As the *Sixth Tone* report noted, channels used previously to sell made-in-India cancer drugs are now offering antivirals. "On the Chinese e-commerce platforms... at least four generic COVID drugs produced in India – Primovir, Paxista, Molnunat, and Molnatris – have been listed for sale in recent weeks. Primovir and Paxista are both generic versions of Paxlovid, while the other two are generic versions of Molnupiravir. All four drugs appear to have been approved for emergency use by the Indian authorities, but are not legal for use in China," the report said. Some Chinese who tested Primovir pills they had purchased found the drugs did not contain Nirmatrelvir, a key component.

Yin Ye, the head of BGI, a Chinese genomics company, wrote on December 31 that of the 143 samples tested of what was sold as Primovir, only one contained Nirmatrelvir. After China eased restrictions in 2019 on the import of drugs, unapproved medicines, including cancer drugs from India, have entered the country in large numbers, although the trade had been curtailed because of limited transport channels during the pandemic.

He Xiaobing, the head of Beijing Memorial Pharmaceutical, told *Sixth Tone* that India was "the only country where we can source reliable and affordable COVID drugs with guaranteed therapeutic effects".

"But the strong demand was used by illegal groups who produce counterfeit drugs," he added. "This will badly affect patients' treatment."

Army kills two infiltrators near LoC in Poonch, seizes weapons, war-like stores

The recovered arms and ammunitions include one AK-47 rifle, two magazines, 21 rounds, one modified AK-56 rifle, one Chinese pistol and IEDs; death toll in the Dangri attack touches seven

The Hindu Bureau
JAMMU

Two infiltrators were killed close to the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday. Meanwhile, one more injured civilian died of injuries, taking the death toll in the Dangri attack to seven.

According to the Army, soldiers manning the LoC observed suspicious movement of two infiltrators, who were trying to sneak across the LoC in the Balakot Sector in Poonch, around 7 p.m. on Saturday. "Around 7.45 p.m., there was a loud mine explosion triggered by infiltrating terrorists. Our troops saw the movement near the fence and engaged the terrorists by bringing aimed fire onto them. Once the firing has ceased, our troops on the fence and troops on LoC readjusted the cordon to prevent their escape," an Army spokesman said.

The Army employed night-enabled quadcopter and other surveillance devices to keep a vigil on the cordoned area. "Troops commenced a search operation at 2 a.m. on January 8. Two bodies were recovered along with weapons, magazines, ammunition and other war-like stores."

Huge cache: Army personnel displaying arms and ammunition recovered from the militants gunned down in Poonch on Sunday. PTI

Huge haul

Among the seized weapons included one AK-47 rifle, two magazines, 21 rounds, one modified AK-56 rifle, one Chinese pistol with one magazine and five rounds, two Chinese hand grenades and two high-intensity IEDs and a mobile phone. "Search operation continues in the area," the Army said. On December 29, three terrorists, who were attempting to infiltrate, were challenged by effective fire and managed to escape into the forests. On December 30, the Army recovered two pistols, three magazines, 24 rounds of pistol, 30 rounds of AK-47, night-vision goggles, a dagger, winter clothing, rubber gloves and eatables sufficient for sustenance for a prolonged period in the area.

The death toll in the Dangri attack has touched seven. The victim was identified as Prince, whose brother Deepak also lost his life in the attack. Prince breathed his last at the Government Medical College and Hospital, Jammu, where he was shifted for treatment. He is survived by an ailing mother.

The Army said the operations to nab terrorists involved in the Dangri attack would continue along with other security forces operating in the region, particularly in Rajouri and Poonch districts.

Pak. national among 5 named by NIA in Ludhiana blast case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The NIA said that Pakistan-based Zulfikar gave IEDs to operatives in Punjab hired by mastermind

The National Investigation Agency (NIA), in the chargesheet filed in connection with the Ludhiana court complex blast in December 2021, has identified a Pakistan-based smuggler through whose network the improvised explosive device (IED) had allegedly been brought into the country.

In the chargesheet, the NIA had arraigned five accused namely Gagandeep Singh (dead), Surmukh Singh, Dilbag Singh and Rajanpreet Singh from Punjab in India, apart from Zulfikar, aka Phalwan, who is from Baddomalhi of Narowal in Pakistan that is not far from the Indian border in Punjab.

According to the agency, Lakhbir Singh Rode, chief of the banned organisation International Sikh Youth Federation, from Pakistan was the mastermind of the explosion. Gagandeep Singh, who allegedly carried the IED to the court complex, was killed and six persons were injured in the incident on December 23, 2021.

The NIA alleged that in order to execute his plans for triggering the blasts at various places in Punjab, Rode roped in Pakistan-based elements and also recruited operatives in India to smuggle the IEDs. Zulfikar, who is an alleged cross-border smuggler of arms, explosives and drugs; Harpreet Singh, who operated from Malaysia; Surmukh, Dilbag and Rajanpreet Singh were part of the conspiracy. The IED was delivered to Gagandeep.

Various provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Explosive Substance Act, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act have been invoked against the accused. The NIA took over the case in January 2022.

In December 2022, the agency arrested Harpreet soon after he landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport from Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.

"The arrested accused was also involved and wanted in various cases, including the smuggling of explosives, arms, and narcotics. Earlier, the NIA had declared a reward of ₹10 lakh on Harpreet Singh @ Happy Malaysia...," the agency had said, after taking him into custody.

SC stay on Allahabad HC order on U.P. local body elections a deviation from its earlier judgment

NEWS ANALYSIS

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court stay of a direction of the Allahabad High Court to immediately notify local body polls in Uttar Pradesh in the general/open category without reserving seats for Other Backward Classes (OBC) is a deviation from its own May 10, 2022, judgment concerning local body elections in Madhya Pradesh.

On December 27 last year, the Allahabad High Court had followed the law laid down by a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in *Suresh Mahajan v State of Madhya Pradesh* in May.

In the *Suresh Mahajan* judgment, a three-judge Bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar (now retired) had held that until the triple test/conditions were completed, no reservation for Backward Classes could be provided. In case such an exercise cannot be completed before the issue of the election programme, the seats, except those reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, must be notified for general category. Political parties "who claim to be the protagonist of participation of OBC in the governance of local bodies" could field Backward Class candidates in general category seats.

> Neither State Election panel nor the State or the Legislature can countenance dispensation to the contrary
>
> **JUSTICE A.M. KHANWILKAR**
> Supreme Court

The judgment had made it clear that its directions would hold true for all States and Union Territories, and were not limited to Madhya Pradesh. Triple test mandates a dedicated commission to collate contemporaneous empirical data on politically backward citizens and recommend reservation of seats for them in local bodies.

Justice Khanwilkar had highlighted the constitutional mandate to conduct fresh elections to local bodies every five years.

"This constitutional mandate is inviolable. Neither the State Election Commission nor the State government or for that matter the State Legislature, including this court in exercise of powers under Article 142 of the Constitution, can countenance dispensation to the contrary," the May judgment had underscored.

The Allahabad High Court had applied the May 10 judgment in the case of Uttar Pradesh while directing the notification of the election programme without OBC reservation.

The High Court had learnt that the Uttar Pradesh government had neither a dedicated commission in place nor complied with the triple test conditions despite the admitted fact that the terms of several local bodies were expiring by January 31, 2023.

In fact, the State government notified the setting up of the Uttar Pradesh State Local Bodies Dedicated Backward Classes Commission on December 28, a day after the High Court judgment. On January 4, a two-judge Bench led by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud stayed the High Court direction to notify elections immediately while recording an assurance from Uttar Pradesh that the commission would "expeditiously", by March 31, "ascertain the proportion of population of backward class in the total population, local body-wise".

Piyush Goyal to visit U.S. for 13th trade policy forum

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will visit the U.S. to participate in the 13th India-U.S. Trade Policy Forum (TPF) from January 9 to 11. Mr. Goyal will meet Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo in Washington on January 11. He will also interact with USTR (U.S. Trade Representative) Ambassador Catherine Tai, said a press release.

"The 12th TPF Ministerial meeting was held on November 23, 2021, in New Delhi," the press note said.

Mr. Goyal will meet leading American entrepreneurs and CEOs of reputed multinational enterprises and attend a community meeting in New York.

Couple fake death to avoid repaying loan

The Hindu Bureau
JAMMU

A couple from Doda district in Jammu, who faked death in a road accident to escape repaying debt, has been traced to Haryana, said the J&K Police on Sunday. "They were believed to have drowned in the Chenab river after their car plunged into it near the Gadsoo area on December 20, 2022," the police said.

The police had launched a rescue operation but could not trace any bodies. However, police recovered a broken number plate, two ID cards, and eShraman card of Manjeet Singh and his wife's purse. The police said during the investigation it came to fore that Mr. Singh had taken ₹30 lakh as loan.

Police nab 22-year-old from Navi Mumbai for damaging crosses in Mahim cemetery

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Mumbai Police on Sunday arrested 22-year-old Dawood Ibrahim Mohammed Haroon Qureshi from Navi Mumbai for allegedly vandalising 18 crosses at the cemetery attached to St. Michael's Church.

Senior Inspector Sudhakar Baburao Shirsath said based on technical evidence, Mr. Qureshi was picked up from Navi Mumbai and they are questioning him. "As of now, he didn't reveal the reason for his act," he said.

Earlier, the Mumbai Police filed a case against unidentified persons for allegedly vandalising several crosses at the cemetery.

The vandalised cross inside Mahim cemetery in Mumbai. A forensic team collected fingerprints from the premises. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Mahim Police, who registered a case under relevant sections of the IPC, analysed the video footage of surveillance cameras in and around the church and found a person entering the graveyard.

The trespasser was seen damaging the crosses. According to the police, the person in the video footage was identified and teams were formed to arrest the miscreant.

A forensic team collected fingerprints and other evidence from the premises.

Case against juvenile in Kathua gang-rape case

Press Trust of India
JAMMU/NEW DELHI

Shubam Sangra, declared an adult by the Supreme Court, is formally chargesheeted by the Jammu and Kashmir Police's Crime Branch in a case related to the gang rape and murder of an eight-year-old girl in Kathua in 2018.

Though the trial is expected to start in Pathankot district of Punjab, as ordered by the Supreme Court in 2018, the Crime Branch submitted a chargesheet under Sections related to murder, rape, kidnapping and wrongful confinement before the Chief Judicial Magistrate in Kathua.

A hearing is scheduled for January 24.

APPEAL

Sangeetha is 13 years suffering from Ewing Sarcoma. Her family is extremely poor and cannot afford the huge expenditure of **Rs.4,00,000/-** to undergo Chemotherapy at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. She needs your blessings and support. Donations sent by Ch/D.D. favouring **Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged.** The donations sent through Ch/D.D/NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C No.60182010063310, IFSC No. CNRB0016018) favouring **WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE** is exempted under 80G IT.

All correspondence is done through **WWS,** Regd. Public Charitable Trust, **Flat No.GF 1, Corddel Apartments, O.No.13, N.No.29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai - 600006. Ph: 044-42137401/28235324/7338978027. E Mail ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com** Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org

WWS

Yatra to have impact in J&K, says Chand after rejoining Cong.

Vijaita Singh
Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

The yatra is expected to enter Jammu around January 20 after covering Punjab and Himachal

The Bharat Jodo Yatra will have a good impact in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), former J&K Deputy Chief Minister Tara Chand said on Sunday. The yatra, which is currently passing through Haryana, is expected to enter the Jammu region around January 20 after covering Punjab and Himachal Pradesh.

Speaking to *The Hindu* over the phone, Mr. Chand, who rejoined the Congress after leaving Ghulam Nabi Azad's Democratic Azad Party (DAP) on Friday, said the yatra will help build bridges between communities.

The yatra is expected to end on January 30, with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi hoisting the National Flag in Srinagar.

On the participation of top political leaders from the Valley in the Srinagar leg of the yatra, Mr. Chand said, "This will send a very good message to the people of the Kashmir Valley as well as Jammu and to the rest of the country."

Asked about the recent spike in the targeted killings of Hindus in the Valley, he said, "From the time of our government, Kashmiri Pandits and other Hindu employees have been there in the Valley. But such selective killing is a recent phenomenon. I would request the administration to shift them [Hindus] to the Jammu region as life is more important than livelihood."

Security arrangements

A senior government official told *The Hindu* that the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) commandos who provide proximate security cover to Rahul Gandhi are being "rotated every day".

Three days before the yatra reaches J&K, a CRPF team will reach there and hold detailed discussions with the local administration and the police.

"The security box or the main vehicle is provided by the CRPF, the additional forces and arrangements are done by the local police... When the individual is exposed, as in this case, challenges mount, but we have safeguards in place," the official said.

An Intelligence agency official said as of now there does not seem to be any "specific threat" to the yatra in J&K. "As several political leaders are expected to join Mr. Gandhi in J&K, a watch will have to be kept, but there's no specific chatter to suggest any serious threat to the yatra," the official said.

Himachal Cabinet gets seven Ministers; 6 MLAs made chief parliamentary secretaries

Vikramaditya Singh, son of former CM Virbhadra Singh, among those inducted in the swearing-in held after a prolonged delay; Kuldeep Singh Rathore, former Congress State president, kept out

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

Team assembled: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu (left) at the oath-taking ceremony of chief parliamentary secretaries. TWITTER/@CMOFFICEHP

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Sunday expanded his Cabinet by inducting seven Ministers. Six other MLAs were appointed chief parliamentary secretaries.

Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar administered the Oath of Office and Secrecy to the appointees at a function in the Raj Bhavan in Shimla.

Dhani Ram Shandil (Solan district), Chander Kumar (Kangra), Harshwardhan Chauhan (Sirmour), Jagat Singh Negi (Kinnaur), Rohit Thakur (Shimla), Anirudh Singh (Shimla), and Vikramaditya Singh (Shimla), son of former Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh, are the new Ministers.

Though three Ministers are from Shimla district, Kuldeep Singh Rathore, who was instrumental in uniting the party during his tenure as the Pradesh Congress Committee president, was excluded.

From Kangra, regarded as the most politically significant district in the State and where the Congress won 10 of the 15 seats in the recent election, only one legislator has made it to the Cabinet.

Ahead of the Cabinet expansion, the Chief Minister announced the names of six MLAs as chief parliamentary secretaries, to "accommodate" the legislators in the government, given the cap of 12 Ministers, including the Chief Minister, for the State.

The CPSs, who were sworn in by the CM, are Sundar Thakur, Ram Kumar, Ashish Butail, Kishori Lal, Mohan Lal Brakta, and Sanjay Awasthi.

Mr. Sukhu had given a list of 10 legislators to the party high command to be inducted as Ministers. However, only seven were elevated. Party insiders said the leadership had reservations over finalising all the 10 names in one go.

This was the first Cabinet expansion of the government. The Congress came to power bagging 40 seats in the 68-member Assembly.

On December 11, Mr. Sukhu took oath as the Chief Minister and Mukesh Agnihotri as Deputy Chief Minister.

The appointment of CPSs has once again kicked up a debate. Hemant Kumar, a lawyer, pointed out that in 2005, a Division Bench of the Himachal Pradesh High Court had quashed the appointment of 12 CPSs by the then Congress government, terming it "illegal and unconstitutional".

However, in 2007, the Assembly enacted the Parliamentary Secretaries Appointment Act, 2006, which has not been adjudicated judicially. Hence, CPSs are being appointed in the State under the said Act, Mr. Kumar said.

INBRIEF

Akhilesh refuses tea offered by police over 'poison fear'

Amid a high-voltage face-off on Sunday, Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav refused to have tea offered to him at the Uttar Pradesh police headquarters in Lucknow, alleging that it may have been "poisoned". The incident happened when Mr. Yadav reached the headquarters to ask on what grounds the party's social media functionary Manish Jagan Agarwal had been arrested. In a video clip, Mr. Yadav can be heard arguing with the police and saying, "I will not drink the tea of this place; either I will bring it from outside or my own. What if it's poisoned? I don't trust you." Meanwhile, hundreds of SP workers gathered outside the headquarters, demanding Mr. Agarwal's release.

BJP demands apology from Nitish for 'sexist' remark

The BJP has slammed Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for saying that "men are careless and do not take responsibility about population control in the State, while women remain uneducated", terming it a "sexist" remark which has tarnished the image of the State and the dignity of the CM's post. The BJP demanded an "apology" from Mr. Kumar, who made the remark on Saturday while addressing a public meeting at Hajipur in Vaishali district as part of his ongoing *Samadhan Yatra*. "Has Nitish Kumar forgotten the limitations of language morality? It was not expected from him," State BJP spokesperson Nikhil Anand said. "The words [that the] Chief Minister Nitish Kumar used [are the] height of insensitivity. He has tarnished the dignity of the post of Chief Minister," tweeted State BJP leader Samrat Choudhary.

'Pranab was a consensus maker who only worked for improving the country'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Remembering the leader: A panel discussion was organised by the Pranab Mukherjee Legacy Foundation on Sunday. FILE PHOTO

Former President Pranab Mukherjee was a "consensus maker" and a "troubleshooter" who could handle contradictions to take the nation forward, a group of his former colleagues and political compatriots observed on Sunday in a panel discussion organised by the Pranab Mukherjee Legacy Foundation.

"He (Mukherjee) said without contradiction there is no movement in life. His life and work are inseparable from the building of modern India," CPI (M) leader Sitaram Yechury said participating in the discussion "Remembering Pranab". Mr. Yechury said Mukherjee used his energy and intellect only for one purpose and that was to improve India.

The CPI(M) general secretary said that though he and his party had their differences with the former Congress stalwart, it was after the Vajpayee government that the idea of a broad secular alliance was forged of which Mukherjee became the main "pointsman" and the "troubleshooter".

Pawan K. Varma, former diplomat and MP, said what struck him while working with Mukherjee in various capacities was his mastery over a subject and the brief which had been presented to him.

"He had the ability to focus on what is required," Mr. Varma said, adding that his diary in which he took hand-written notes was probably a national treasure.

He also recalled the controversy over the former President addressing the RSS convention saying he understood "we are a civilisation which has survived on dialogue even with the person with whom you do not agree". This ability for dialogue is what makes you help build a nation.

N.K. Singh, Chairman of the 15th Finance Commission, pointed out similarities between former Prime Minister late Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Mukherjee. He said while Vajpayee handled a coalition government, Mukherjee also brought about consensus through his leadership of various Group of Ministers (GoMs).

Former Chhattisgarh Governor Shekhar Dutta recalled how he had the unique ability to bring different people together and never stopped learning himself.

BJP leader Keshari Nath dies

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

Former West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi passed away at his residence in Prayagraj on Sunday. The 88-year-old BJP leader was a five-time MLA from Allahabad South. He also served as Speaker three times.

In his condolence message, Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded Tripathi's contribution in building the saffron party during the 1990s.

भारत सरकार, अंतरिक्ष विभाग
Government of India, Department of Space
भारतीय अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान संगठन (इसरो)
INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION [ISRO]
इसरो केंद्रीकृत भर्ती बोर्ड (आइ.सी.आर.बी.)
ISRO CENTRALISED RECRUITMENT BOARD [ICRB]
सहायक, कनिष्ठ वैयक्तिक सहायक, प्रवर श्रेणी लिपिक एवं आशुलिपिकों की भर्ती
RECRUITMENT OF ASSISTANTS, JUNIOR PERSONAL ASSISTANTS, UPPER DIVISION CLERK AND STENOGRAPHERS

दिनांक 20.12.2022 की विज्ञापन संख्या इसरो:आइ.सी.आर.बी.: 02 (ए-जे.पी.ए.):2022 के दिनांक 09.01.2023 का शुद्धिपत्र

Corrigendum dated 09.01.2023 to Advt No.ISRO:ICRB:02 (A-JPA):2022 dated 20.12.2022.

दिनांक 20.12.2022 की विज्ञापन संख्या इसरो: आइ.सी.आर.बी.: 02 (ए-जे.पी.ए.):2022 से संबंधित शुद्धिपत्र इसरो की वेबसाइट पर उपलब्ध है। शुद्धिपत्र से संबंधित संपूर्ण विवरण के लिए कृपया इसरो की वेबसाइट **www.isro.gov.in** देखें। ऑनलाइन आवेदन प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि **16.01.2023** तक बढ़ाई जाती है।

A corrigendum to Advt No. ISRO:ICRB:02 (A-JPA):2022 dated 20.12.2022 is hosted in ISRO website. For complete details on corrigendum please visit ISRO website at **www.isro.gov.in.** The last date for receipt of on-line applications is also extended up to **16.01.2023**.

T.T.DEVASTHANAMS, TIRUPATI
MARKETING DEPARTMENT
e-Procurement Tender Notice
e-Tenders are invited for supply of **"54,000 kgs of Cardamom (ELACHI) 8 mm size (AGEB) variety through e-tenders"** for a period of 04 months to the Marketing Department, T.T.Devasthanams. For Tender notice and tender details log on to the website **http://www.tirumala.org** and **https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in. For further details contact phone numbers: 0877-2264079, 2264555, FAX No: 0877-2264554.**
ROC. NO. PR4 / 13950/ Adv. No.340/ PRO / 2023. Dated: 08.01.2023 Sd/- Executive Officer

BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly owned by Government of Karnataka undertaking)
(CIN-U04010KA2002SGC030438)
BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through e-procurement)
BESCOM invites tender vide Enquiry No: BESCOM/GM(DSM)/DGM(SG&EV)/BC-53/2022-23/ENQ–93 dated: 06.01.2023 for **Hiring an agency for setting up EV accelerator cell in the State of Karnataka.**
Bid Documents available: from **11.01.2023 17:00 hrs onwards.** Last Date for submission of Queries through e-portal: Upto **18.01.2023 before 17:00 hrs.** Pre- bid meeting: **On 19.01.2023 @ 11:00 hrs** through video conference: https://meet.google.com/nki-jedx-qap Last date for Bid submission: **Upto 02.02.2023 @ 17:00 hrs.** Opening of Bid Documents: **On 03.02.2023 @ 11:00 hrs.** The Bid documents can be downloaded and necessary assistance can be obtained through the e-procurement portal from the Web site **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in.** Aspiring bidders need to register on e-procurement portal. Bidders can take the assistance from the office of the General Manager (DSM), 2nd Block, 1st Floor, Corporate Office, BESCOM, Bangalore. Contact No: 080-22340816.
For Electricity related complaints call: 1912
Download "BESCOM Mithra" Mobile APP
Sd/-
The General Manager (DSM), BESCOM

भारत सरकार - अंतरिक्ष विभाग / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA - DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
निर्माण एवं अनुरक्षण समूह, एसडीएससी-शार / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC-SHAR
श्रीहरिकोटा / नेल्लूर (जिला), आं.प्र./ SRIHARIKOTA - 524124
संक्षिप्त ई–निविदा सूचना / Brief E-TENDER NOTICE
सं.शार:सीएमजी सिविल:अनुरक्षण:ई–जन संपर्क निविदा/ No:SHAR:CMGCIVIL:MAINT:E-PT-18/22-23 तिथि/ Date. 06.01.2023
भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से **"सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र शार स्थित जीरो प्वाइंट एवं एफएलपी क्षेत्रों में सिविल कार्यों के लिए सावधि संविदा"** (टी/सी-22-092, अनुमानित लागत ₹100.00 लाख), **"सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र शार स्थित एसएमपीसी इकाई 1, 2 तथा एसएमपी एवं ईटीएफ क्षेत्रों में सिविल कार्यों के लिए सावधि संविदा"** (टी/सी-22-093, अनुमानित लागत ₹100.00 लाख) **"सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र शार की एसएमपीसी इकाई 1 में प्रवेश (कनेक्टिंग) सड़कों का पुनर्निर्माण"** (टी/सी-22-094, अनुमानित लागत ₹85.14 लाख), **"सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र शार की नवीन एलसीसी भवन में ध्वनिक दीवार पैनलिंग लगाना"** (टी/सी-22-095, अनुमानित लागत ₹23.84 लाख), **"सतीश धवन अंतरिक्ष केंद्र शार की एसएमपीसी इकाई 2 में सिविल मेरलॉन मरम्मत कार्य"** (टी/सी-22-096, अनुमानित लागत ₹13.83 लाख) हेतु मद दर ई–निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा दस्तावेज **23.01.2023** को **14:30** बजे तक डाउनलोड किए जा सकते हैं। विस्तृत सूचना हेतु इच्छुक निविदाकार हमारी वेबसाइट **www.isro.gov.in** या **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO** देखें।
On behalf of President of India, Item Rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for **"Term Contract for Civil works @ Zero Point & FLP areas, SDSC SHAR"** (T/C-22-092, Est. cost ₹100.00 Lakhs); **"Term Contract for Civil works @ SMPC Unit 1, 2 & SMP & ETF areas, SDSC SHAR"** (T/C-22-093, Est. cost ₹100.00 Lakhs); **"Resurfacing of connecting roads @ SMPC Unit-1, SDSC SHAR"** (T/C-22-094, Est. cost ₹85.14 Lakhs); **"Providing Acoustic wall paneling at New LCC building, SDSC SHAR"** (T/C-22-095, Est. cost ₹23.84 Lakhs); **"Civil Merlon repair works at SMPC Unit-2, SDSC SHAR"** (T/C-22-096, Est. cost ₹13.83 Lakhs)". Tender documents can be downloaded up to **23.01.2023**, **14:30** hrs. Interested tenderers may visit **www.isro.gov.in** or **www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO** for details.
हस्ताक्षरित- समूह प्रधान, सीएमजी / एसडीएससी शार / Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG / SDSC SHAR

NATIONAL BOARD OF EXAMINATIONS IN MEDICAL SCIENCES
(Autonomous body of the M/o. Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India)
NAMS Building, Medical Enclave, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi – 110029
National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) – MDS 2023
NOTICE
National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) shall conduct the next NEET-MDS on **1st March 2023**.
Please refer to the Information Bulletin at NBEMS website https://natboard.edu.in for details pertaining to eligibility criteria, fee structure, scheme of examination and other details.

Important Dates	
Availability of Information Bulletin	9th January 2023 onwards
Online Submission of the Application Form	9th January 2023 (3 PM Onwards) to 30th January 2023 (Till 11:55 PM)
Date of Examination	1th March 2023
Declaration of the Result	By 31st March 2023

Candidate Care Support: +91-22-61087595
- Helpline Portal on applicant login page
- Communication Web Portal on NBEMS Website

सत्यमेव जयते
THE ADMINISTRATION OF UNION TERRITORY OF LADAKH
TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
LADAKH SKILL DEVELOPMENT MISSION
Civil Secretariate, Leh, Ladakh-194101
email : secy.techeduc@gmail.com
ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE FOR GEM BID
The Ladakh Skill Development Mission (LSDM) invites bid for two projects: (i). **Skill Gap Analysis and Livelihood Study** and (ii). **Employability and Life Skills training**, through **GeM portal.**
The complete RFP (Bid document) containing the details of qualification criteria, submission requirement, brief objective & scope of work and evaluation criteria, terms and conditions etc., can be downloaded from the GEM Portal https://gem.gov.in/ with the details as under :-

S. No.	Name of Project/ BID	GEM BID No. & Dated	Bid End Date/ Time
1.	Skill Gap Analysis and Livelihood Study in UT of Ladakh	Bid Number : GEM/2023/B/**2950244** Dated : 05-01-2023	28-01-2023 18:00:00
2.	Employability and Life Skills training in UT of Ladakh	Bid Number : GEM/2023/B/**2950612** Dated : 05-01-2023	30-01-2023 19:00:00

Further details, if any, may be obtained from the OSD, Technical Education and Skill Development, Civil Secretariat, Leh, Ladakh - 194101 during working hours or through email : secy.techeduc@gmail.com.
Sd/-
(Padma Angmo) IIS
Mission Director
Ladakh Skill Development Mission.

INBRIEF

BSF deploys radars to check tunnels along Pakistan border

Drone-mounted ground penetration radars have been deployed for the first time by the Border Security Force (BSF) to check for the presence of underground tunnels used by terrorists to infiltrate the India-Pakistan border in the Jammu region, officials said. The indigenously made technical gadget has been pressed into action at this front recently as part of the below-the-earth tunnel detection exercise carried out by the force to ensure no terrorist is able to sneak into the Indian territory and conduct strikes in Jammu and Kashmir or any other location of the country. These structures in the region have also been used to smuggle narcotics, arms and ammunition. PTI

Himachal government increases VAT on diesel

The Congress government in Himachal Pradesh has increased the value-added tax (VAT) on diesel by ₹3 a litre, inviting sharp criticism from the BJP. A notification with regard to the amendment of VAT on diesel was issued on January 7, which came into force from midnight. The government dropped VAT on petrol by 0.55 paise. The VAT on diesel, which was earlier ₹4.40 a litre, shall after the amendment be ₹7.40 a litre. With this, the price of diesel will go up from the current ₹83 to ₹86 a litre in the State. The BJP said the Congress had put a financial burden on people in a bid to enjoy power.

Indian Oil chairman will also be firm's managing director

Most big listed companies globally are run by a managing director or CEO and a chairman presiding over the board of directors. But, India's largest oil company, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), is an exception for never having a managing director or a CEO in its 63 years of existence. But this is likely to change soon with the Oil Ministry agreeing to redesignate the top post as chairman and managing director. The company has long been demanding for such a change to bring it on a par with other large public sector and private firms. That demand has now been agreed to, sources said. PTI

Ceiling fans get costlier as BEE mandates star labelling

Ceiling fans will get costlier by 8% to 20% as the category has come within the ambit of mandatory star labelling from January 1, as per the revised Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) norms. Star labelling denotes energy savings of a minimum 30% for one-star rated fans to over 50% for five-star rated fans. Though leading manufacturers such as Havells, Orient Electric and Usha International have welcomed the move, they also believe it will lead to cost increase of 5% to 20% as high energy efficient five-star rated fans will require new imported motors and electronic components. Under the new mandate, manufacturers will have to display the star ratings on their fans. PTI

Despite SC order, single women denied abortion

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

When Mumbai-based Shalini (name changed) walked into the State-run J.J. Hospital in December last year seeking an abortion, she was turned away. Doctors at the hospital decided that her case was legally complicated. Her pregnancy had crossed 20 weeks, she was unmarried and the reason for her pregnancy was determined "as due to failure of contraception". She then approached the Wadia Hospital, a charitable institution, which too turned her away.

Shalini wanted to discontinue her pregnancy as she was not ready to have the baby. When her pleas to two hospitals fell on deaf ears, Shalini had to finally move the Bombay High Court citing the Supreme Court judgment to get a favourable recourse.

Despite the fact that in September last year, a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court passed a judgment that unmarried women too can terminate their pregnancy until 24 weeks, the situation on the ground remains dismal. Women are having to run from pillar to post to seek abortion.

Nikhil Datar, a senior gynaecologist and medical director at Cloudnine Hospital, says that despite the "SC having given an extremely progressive judgment on an individual case basis, the verdict leaves much to be desired".

Dr. Datar's activism since 2008 had helped pave the way to amend the rules of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, framed in 1971.

He has helped 320 women access abortion *pro bono* by helping them challenge the MTP Act provisions in court.

The SC judgment is progressive. However, a Catch-22 situation arises because there is no clear indication in the SC judgment telling the government to amend the MTP Act to include unmarried women within the extended 24-week ambit.

Dr. Datar says, "It would have been better if the court had directed the government to change rules in accordance with the judgment. Unless rules in the Act are changed in black and white, women will find it difficult to seek abortion in health facilities."

Rule 3(2)(b) of the MTP (Amendment) Rules, 2021 does not permit single women to abort after 20 weeks. Dr. Datar says the rule is discriminatory as it only allows "special categories" including survivors of sexual assault, minors, widows or divorcees, women with disabilities, a malformed foetus or women stuck in humanitarian emergencies, to access abortion post 20 weeks.

Amit Mishra, a practising lawyer in Delhi, had moved the SC against this discrimination, in the case of an unmarried 25-year-old Manipuri woman which led to the landmark verdict last year. Mr. Mishra told *The Hindu* that even after the judgment, many doctors are apprehensive citing the fact that the Act has not been amended.

Mr. Mishra also points out that doctors are scared of prosecution under the complex labyrinth of laws which includes linking of MTP with the Indian Penal Code.

"Under Section 3(1) of IPC, termination of pregnancy is a criminal act if it does not fulfil MTP conditions. With the law not amended, this has a chilling effect on doctors when the police are not aware of the recent SC judgment," he says.

"The government will have to step up to promote safe abortions irrespective of the fact that the woman is married or not. This can include putting up awareness boards outside hospitals citing the judgment," he said.

Dr. Datar has moved the Supreme Court filing another special leave petition (SLP) challenging the current MTP (Amendment) Rules, 2021. "There are multiple loopholes," he says.

For instance, currently there is no mechanism under the rules to monitor the movement of abortion pills. Mifepristone and Misoprostol are popular drugs used for medical abortion at clinics.

Equal rights

Abortion laws in India have come a long way but there is always room for change as recent developments show

- The MTP (Amendment) Act, 2021, introduced a key change in Section 3 by extending the upper limit for termination of pregnancy from 20 to 24 weeks for special categories
- The top court went a step further, ruling that marital status should not be a barrier for women to seek an abortion up to 24 weeks of pregnancy

Jaishankar hails role of centres of faith abroad

The young members of the diaspora can learn values and traditions from such institutions to stay connected to their Indian roots, says Minister at Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas function

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

The increasing number of Indian "centres of faith" abroad are a "matter of pride", External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Sunday.

Addressing Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, 2023, the first event of the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention, in Indore, Mr. Jaishankar said the young members of the Indian diaspora could learn values and traditions from such institutions to stay connected to their Indian roots.

"Many of our embassies, in fact, I think most of them today now offer yoga, dance and music classes. We ask them also to support and facilitate community functions and collective activities. It is a matter of pride for us that centres of faith are growing abroad," said Mr. Jaishankar, making a special mention of "the one in Abu Dhabi" in the UAE.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched the construction of the Hindu temple project in Abu Dhabi on February 11, 2018 and the construction of the structure is expected to be completed soon.

Spreading light: External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar at the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Indore on Sunday. PTI

Unveiling a model of the temple, Mr. Modi had said, "The first traditional temple in Abu Dhabi will act as a catalyst for the flourishing of humanitarian values and harmony between the two countries. The temple will become a medium for India's identity."

Staying connected

Reflecting that sentiment, Mr. Jaishankar connected the Indian identity with faith, and added, "The centres of faith are growing abroad because they also serve to inculcate values, promote culture and nurture traditions. The youth living abroad today, therefore, have many more opportunities than before to stay connected."

He said the New Education Policy would "create more pathways for deeper involvement of the diaspora".

Mr. Jaishankar conveyed the government's commitment to ensure a "more secure travelling experience abroad" and "non-discriminatory treatment" for Indians in foreign countries. In this regard, he mentioned the recent agreements on "migration and mobility" that India has concluded with multiple countries such as Austria.

"Younger generations are also very much in the forefront of connecting India to the world. They do so not only through their activities at home but by studying, working and travelling abroad," said Mr. Jaishankar.

The 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention is taking place between January 8 and 10.

Zaneta Mascarenhas, MP from Australia, was the guest of honour at Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports Anurag Thakur highlighted links between the Indian diaspora and the Indian youth and said, "The 17th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention is an opportunity to build bonds of friendship, mentorship and camaraderie that are forged when Indian youth directly interact with and learn from our diaspora youth."

Mr. Thakur appealed to the young Indian diaspora to innovate, invest and initiate their ideas which he said has emerged as the third largest start-up nation.

"Last year, India attained the status of the world's fifth-largest economy. We overtook those who ruled us for 200 years to become the fifth largest economy," Mr. Thakur said.

In the past eight years, India became the third largest nation with start-ups, he said.

(With inputs from PTI)

NMC to reconsider MBBS internship cut-off date for NEET

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Officials say they will not take any step which will prove detrimental to the future of students

After prospective candidates of the postgraduate National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) wrote to the Health and Family Welfare Ministry appealing for an extension of the March 31 cut-off date to finish MBBS internships to take the test, the National Medical Commission is actively considering the matter.

On January 7, a day after the NEET-PG date was announced to be March 5, the Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA) shot off the letter, saying the March 31 cut-off would render 40,000 to 50,000 MBBS students ineligible for the test.

Panel decision

A senior official from the National Board of Examinations (NBE) told *The Hindu* that the cut-off date was decided by the National Medical Commission (NMC).

"NMC officials are studying the matter and they may take a call to extend the cut-off date limit for the internship further. Once they indicate a change, we will reissue the NEET-PG bulletin," an NBE official said.

A senior official from the NMC confirmed, "We will not take any step which is detrimental to the future of the MBBS students."

Delays caused during the past two years of COVID-19 had led many MBBS students to finish their year-long internship late.

According to data collated by FORDA from 23 States, the internship culmination dates for the MBBS students were varying from April to November 2023.

"In Bihar, for instance, the internships will culminate sometime in August. In Chhattisgarh, the internships will end only in November. The students started interning late as the entire health system was busy with pandemic damage control. Most of them were asked to report for hospital postings to fulfil workforce shortage during COVID," Aviral Mathur, president of FORDA, said.

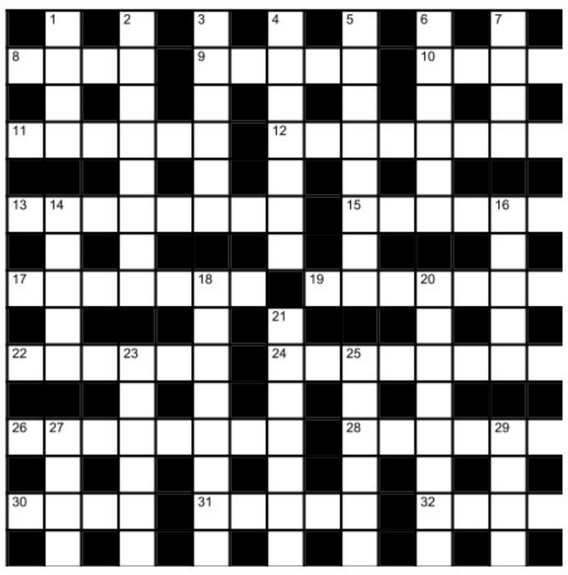
After the NEET-PG dates were announced, MBBS doctors and students from across India have written to FORDA requesting the extension of the internship date cut-off.

TH CROSSWORD + 13758

(set by Incognito)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ *https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8 Monk rejected a meal devoid of energy (4)
9 Moved through water with setter and holy man (5)
10 Some parts of minivans, with initial capitalisation, may be terrible! (4)
11 Robed girl had title (6)
12 After initially biting, reptile swallows unknown number in snowstorm (8)
13 My French bird and animal (8)
15 Ladies laid out standards of perfection to be achieved (6)
17 Hide amount of money in ice-cream container and eat (7)
19 Tailless monkey dances behind post office for game creature (7)
22 Major Danny's country (6)
24 Rescues student captured by primitive people (8)
26 & 31 Absent, eh? Reveal everything! (5,3,5)
28 Jerk beginning to tremble in front of enchantress (6)
30 When returning, sentry gives away a narcotic substance (4)
31 See 26 (5)
32 Grace changing lane (4)

Down

1 Temporary, but intensely pursued interest, with love for melancholic Portuguese song (4)
2 Vehicle going on top of horses carrying head of estate results in bloodbaths (8)
3 Familiar with duets composed about Oscar (4,2)
4 Losing them may make you mad (7)
5 Fin oil spread around pious islander from South-east Asia (8)
6 Sputter, "Include a couple of Zulus in dossier" (6)
7 Father returns Rhode Island brace (4)
14 Small volume inserted into eggs for creating ornamental moulding in architecture (5)
16 John's end of rope is unfastened (5)
18 Boatman sails around island in Canadian province (8)
20 Looked deeply into old pit containing a dinosaur head (8)
21 Spear creature having wrong age before one (7)
23 Drag in river flood (6)
25 Most recent Los Angeles trial (6)
27 Separate component (4)
29 Take tea followed by tea orally and converse (4)

SUDOKU

				8			3	
					6			2
9					5	1		4
8		1		9			5	
		7				2		
	3			7		6		9
5		3	9					6
2			8					
	4			6				

No.SS5674 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

	R	R		D		A		B		A		
Y	E	T	I		R	E	D	H	A	N	D	E	D
	L		N		Y		A		L		D		R
G	I	N	G	E	R		M	O	L	A	S	S	E	S
	G				U		A		Y				S	
L	I	S	T	E	N	I	N		H	A	R	A	S	S
	O		I				T		O		E			
U	N	C	L	E	A	N		C	O	N	S	I	G	N
			E		L		A				T		U	
B	A	R	R	E	L		M	A	J	E	S	T	I	C
	I				R		P		E				N	
S	L	U	G	G	I	S	H		T	H	R	O	N	E
	E		A		G		O		T		A		E	
	D	I	S	C	H	A	R	G	E		S	A	S	H
			H		T		A		D		H		S	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

5	7	9	6	4	1	3	8	2
2	8	3	5	7	9	4	6	1
1	4	6	3	2	8	7	5	9
3	5	8	9	1	2	6	4	7
9	1	7	4	3	6	8	2	5
4	6	2	8	5	7	9	1	3
8	2	4	7	9	5	1	3	6
6	9	1	2	8	3	5	7	4
7	3	5	1	6	4	2	9	8

FAITH

The ultimate wealth

Andal's Thiruppavais are a delight to the devotes of the Lord. It is the offering of Andal to the Lord to attain Him. Sung one pasuram a day adding a divine charm to the month of Margazhi, these offerings of Sri Andal are all unique due to devotion they evoke, said Dhamal Perundevi in a discourse. "*Oruthi Magnai Piranthu*", sung on the 25th day of Margazhi, has a great significance as it captures the entire life of Lord Krishna, outlining the birth, the accomplishments, Rukmini's wedding, Kuchelopakyanam, His many roles including that of charioteer to Arjuna and His divine discourse, the Bhagavad Gita.

Periazhvar showered the child Andal with great love and even as a child, instructed her about the Lord and his magnificence. To saints like him, these were not stories but events they lived through, transporting themselves back in time. Thus the threat of Kamsa wanting to kill any male child of his sister Devaki was very real. Fearing that a mere slip such as mentioning the Lord's name or his birth star might alert Kamsa and put the divine child in danger, Periazhwar says, '*Athathin pathamnaal thondriya Achyutan*' without direct disclosure. Likewise, Andal also says, "*Oruthi maganai pirandhu, oruthi maganai valarndhu*" (born to one woman and raised by another), without directly mentioning Devaki and Yashodha.

In this pasuram, Andal refers to *thiruthakka selvam*. She is talking of the ultimate aishwaryam (wealth), which is bhakti. When Krishna offers all the earth's wealth, the latter says if this wealth would render me egoistic and make me forget You, Krishna, I do not want that – I want only the permanent wealth of being with you."

DAKAR

40 dead and 85 injured in Senegal bus accident, says fire brigade

AFP

Forty people died and 85 were injured when two buses collided near the town of Kaffrine in central Senegal on Sunday, a fire brigade official said. "There were 125 victims, of whom 40 have died," said Colonel Cheikh Fall, who is in charge of operations for the West African country's National Fire Brigade. AFP

LONDON

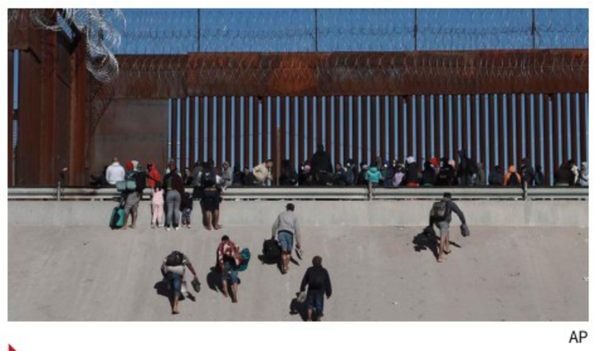
U.K. PM Sunak says he is open to discussing pay raise for nurses

REUTERS

U.K. Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said on Sunday he was willing to discuss pay raise for nurses i to end strikes that have deepened a crisis within the health service. The National Health Service, long treasured and funded by taxpayers, delivers free care to all, but is under strain following years of underinvestment. REUTERS

MEXICO CITY

Migrants, drugs on agenda as U.S. President heads to Mexico



AP

U.S. President Joe Biden will seek Mexico's help tackling illegal flows of migrants and drugs, particularly opioids, during a visit beginning on Sunday for a North American leaders' summit. Another priority is stepping up joint efforts to fight trafficking of fentanyl and other drugs behind an addiction crisis in the U.S. AFP

BEIJING

19 dead in China crash as annual holiday travel rush gets under way

AP

A traffic accident in southern China killed 19 people and injured 20 early on Sunday as the annual Lunar New Year holiday travel rush got under way, authorities said. The accident occurred outside the city of Nanchang in Jiangxi province. The cause of the accident was under investigation, the traffic management brigade said. AP

As China opens borders after 3 years, thousands return home

Travellers to the mainland are no longer required to undergo quarantine on arrival; Beijing has downgraded managing COVID-19 from Class A to Class B, which no longer allows lockdowns

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

Up close: A passenger from an international flight being received at the Capital International Airport in Beijing on Sunday. AFP

Thousands of Chinese travellers on Sunday returned home for family reunions - some delayed by as long as three years - as China finally opened its borders and dismantled the last remnant of its "zero-COVID" regime.

Starting Sunday, travellers to China for the first time were no longer required to undergo quarantine on arrival.

Since early 2020, China has had among the world's strictest travel restrictions, requiring as long as three weeks of central quarantine and "green codes" to be issued from Chinese embassies, many of which were largely reluctant to grant them.

On Sunday, thousands returned to the mainland across multiple land border crossings in Hong Kong and Vietnam and on international flights, for long awaited family reunions ahead of the upcoming Chinese New Year holiday.

The land border crossings between Hong Kong and Shenzhen, which reopened fully after three years, were the busiest points of entry, with as many as 37,000 people crossing over as of Sunday afternoon, according to Hong Kong immigration authorities.

Until Sunday, travellers were made to undergo PCR tests on landing in China before being taken away on buses to central quarantine. The quarantine period for most of the past three years was as long as three weeks, although late last year the period was reduced to five days.

On December 7, China finally ended its "zero-COVID" regime amid a surge of cases. Beijing last month also announced it would end travel restrictions starting Sunday, although travellers will be required to take PCR tests within 48 hours of travel.

On Saturday, China's government announced the tenth edition of its official COVID-19 prevention protocol, which has now downgraded managing the disease from Class A to Class B, no longer allowing for lockdowns and quarantine.

The recent surge of cases in China, which crossed 250 million by December 20 according to estimates of the National Health Commission, has now peaked in many cities, which are in the coming two weeks expecting by far the biggest domestic travel rush since 2019 ahead of the week-long Lunar New Year holiday, starting January 22. Experts fear the holiday could see a rise in cases in rural areas as many from the cities travel home.

China is also expecting to see a surge in outbound tourism after three years of closed borders, despite many countries now requiring travellers from China to take PCR tests before their trips. The orders for international flights were up 628% from last year, State media quoted online Chinese travel agency LY as saying. Hong Kong, the United States, Thailand and Japan are among the most sought after travel destinations.

Moscow, Kyiv exchange 50 captured soldiers each

Reuters

Russia and Ukraine swapped 50 captured soldiers each on Sunday in a deal that both sides welcomed even as they fought one another in eastern Ukraine.

Russia's Defence Ministry said the 50 returned Russian soldiers would be flown to Moscow for medical and psychological rehabilitation. Ukraine also confirmed the information, and said Russia had freed 50 Ukrainian servicemen as part of the deal.

Andriy Yermak, head of the Ukrainian presidential office, posted images of the freed Ukrainian soldiers holding bags of food near a bus and a video of them singing the Ukrainian national anthem once under way.

Sweden can't meet Turkey demands for NATO bid: PM

Agence France-Presse
SÄLEN

Ulf Kristersson

Turkey, which has for months blocked NATO membership bids by Sweden and Finland, has made some demands that Sweden cannot accept, Sweden's Prime Minister said on Sunday.

"Turkey has confirmed that we have done what we said we would do, but it also says that it wants things that we can't, that we don't want to, give it," Ulf Kristersson said during a security conference.

Sweden and Finland broke with decades of military non-alignment and applied to join the U.S.-led defence alliance in response to Russia's February invasion of Ukraine. But Turkey has refused to approve their bid until the two countries take steps, including joining Turkey's fight against banned Kurdish militants. Most of Turkey's demands have involved Sweden because of its more robust ties with the Kurdish diaspora.

Finland's Foreign Minister said that the country would join NATO at the same time as its neighbour.

Iranian held in Germany suspected of terror plot

Agence France-Presse
BERLIN

An Iranian man has been arrested in western Germany suspected of preparing an "Islamist attack" using cyanide and ricin, the police and prosecutors said on Sunday.

The 32-year-old man was "suspected of having prepared a serious act of violence threatening the security of the state by obtaining cyanide and ricin with a view to committing an Islamist attack", the police said. But a search of the man's residence in the town of Castrop-Rauxel found no evidence of toxic substances, an official said.

Ricin is a highly toxic substance, which is classed as a "chemical weapon" in Germany. Much like cyanide, ricin can be lethal.

Palestinian Minister's travel permit revoked

Associated Press
JERUSALEM

Israel on Sunday revoked the Palestinian Foreign Minister's travel permit, part of a series of punitive steps against the Palestinians that Israel's new hard-line government announced days ago.

Riad Malki said in a statement that he was returning from the Brazilian President's inauguration when he was informed that Israel rescinded his travel permit, which allows top Palestinian officials to travel easily in and out of the occupied West Bank, unlike ordinary Palestinians. It was not clear whether the permits of other officials had been revoked as well.

Israel's government on Friday approved the steps to penalize the Palestinians in retaliation for them pushing the U.N.'s highest judicial body to give its opinion on the Israeli occupation. Rulings by the International Court of Justice are not binding, but they can be influential on world opinion.

The decision highlights the tough line the current government is already taking toward the Palestinians just days into its tenure. It comes at a time of spiking violence in the occupied West Bank.

Cancel Sri Lanka's debt, global scholars tell creditors

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Colombo is still in talks with creditors to obtain assurances.

Sri Lanka's recovery from last year's devastating economic crisis will need its creditors to "share the burden" of debt restructuring, leading global economists have said, calling all lenders to cancel the debt of the cash-strapped island nation.

In a statement issued on Sunday, eminent economists and scholars world over observed that amid Sri Lanka's crucial debt negotiations, "all lenders – bilateral, multilateral, and private – must share the burden of restructuring, with assurance of additional financing in the near term."

Greater support

However, Sri Lanka cannot ensure this on its own, they noted.

"It requires much greater international support. Instead of geopolitical manoeuvring, all of Sri Lanka's creditors must ensure debt cancellation sufficient to provide a way out of the current crisis," the statement said.

The nearly 200 signatories to the statement included economists Jayati Ghosh, Thomas Piketty, Yanis Varoufakis, Prabhat Patnaik, Utsa Patnaik, Jean Drèze, Ha-Joon Chang, Jomo Kwame Sundaram, and writer Amitav Ghosh.

Their call comes months after Sri Lanka embarked on debt restructuring talks with its diverse group of creditors, including China, Japan and India, its three major bilateral lenders. Their financing assurances are crucial to Sri Lanka obtaining a $2.9 billion package from the IMF.

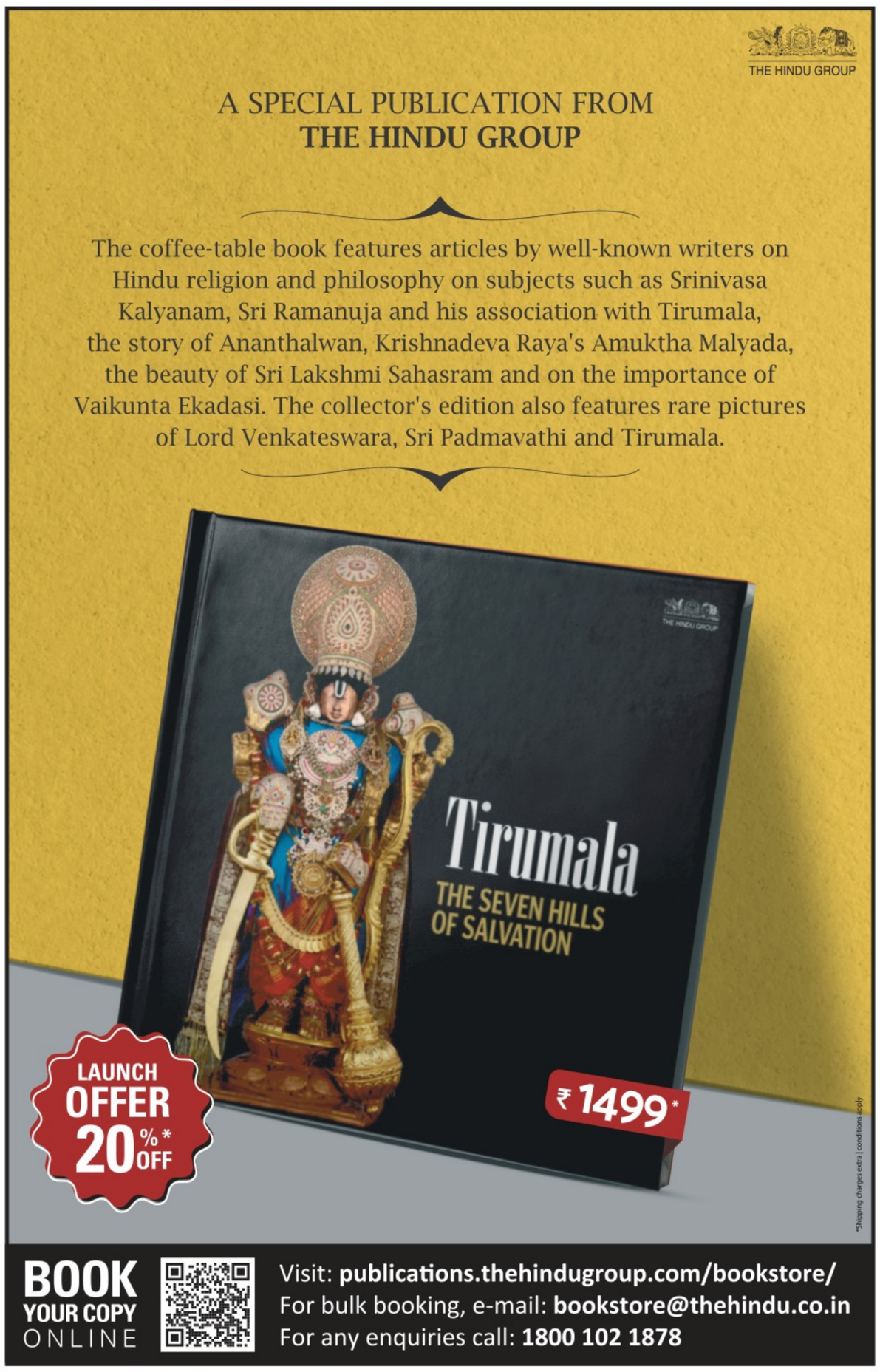
As the import-reliant island nation's Balance of Payments crisis spiralled and led to a painful economic crash last year, the government opted for a pre-emptive default on its $51 billion foreign debt in April 2022.

The senior academics held Sri Lanka's private creditors responsible for the country's first ever default, arguing: "Such lenders charged a premium to lend to Sri Lanka to cover their risks, which accrued them massive profits" and contributed to the default. Private creditors own nearly 40% of Sri Lanka's external debt stock mostly in the form of International Sovereign Bonds (ISBs), but higher interest rates mean that they receive over 50% of external debt payments, they pointed out.

Awaiting guarantee

The default move came while crippling shortages sparked mass street protests across the island. The agitations spanned months and ousted former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa in July 2022. President Ranil Wickremesinghe was elected in his place, through a parliament vote. In September 2022, Sri Lanka reached a staff level agreement with the IMF for a provisional bailout package, that the Fund made contingent on adequate financing assurances from Sri Lanka's creditors. His government has pinned its hopes on IMF support, mainly to qualify for more credit that it deems necessary for reviving its battered economy.

However, Sri Lanka missed the December deadline to obtain the IMF Board's approval, and is still in talks with creditors to obtain assurances. Governor of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka Nandalal Weerasinghe told *The Hindu* in December 2022, that Colombo had provided "all information possible" to its bilateral creditors" and was awaiting assurances from India and China.


THE HINDU GROUP
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ASKUS

K. Nitya Kalyani

Q I wish to buy health insurance for myself and my wife. I am 68 and my wife, 60. Please guide me in selecting the best policy with low premium. Is it worth buying two separate policies to avoid higher premium?
VILAS DESAI

A In this era of escalating healthcare costs and longevity, this expenditure appears to be something each one of us will have to face sooner or later. It is natural to want to plan for it via insurance and your thinking is in the right direction.
The thing with insurance is, it is to your advantage to start early. The premium is always according to the age slab you belong to, no doubt, but as you grow older, your proposal will be evaluated with reference to your age and the proportionately higher risk of illness and treatment expenses.
In short, getting insurance becomes a challenge. (There are specialised policies offered by various companies tailored to senior citizens, at a cost of course.)

Waiting period
When you do get insured, you still have to work out your waiting period of about four years for pre-existing conditions to be covered and a shorter waiting period for specified procedures. Add to this any loading of premium due to adverse medical history, if any.

You would have had better options if you had planned on this sooner. Now, you can do some window shopping among various companies and see who offers a lower premium for the same cover. This is done easily on the websites of various companies where there is a premium calculator and also on the websites of insurance brokers and aggregators where you can generate a quote once you input some parameters like age.

Coming to choosing the right cover, please make an assessment of how much cover you need with reference to where you live, which hospitals you may prefer to get admitted to and also, what the costs for some typical hospitalisations for various reasons are.

If you already have an insurance agent or broker, he is the right person to guide you on which policy to buy, though your choice will be restricted to those companies they represent.

You can take the initiative do search on the Internet for various covers from the dozens of insurance companies to pick the right policy.

A good policy to study to understand how this works is to look for the standardised individual health policy.

This is a policy each and every general insurance or health insurance company has to offer and you can recognise it by its name which will be a combination of the company's name and the words Arogya Sanjeevani Policy, for example, ABC General Insurance Arogya Sanjeevani Policy.

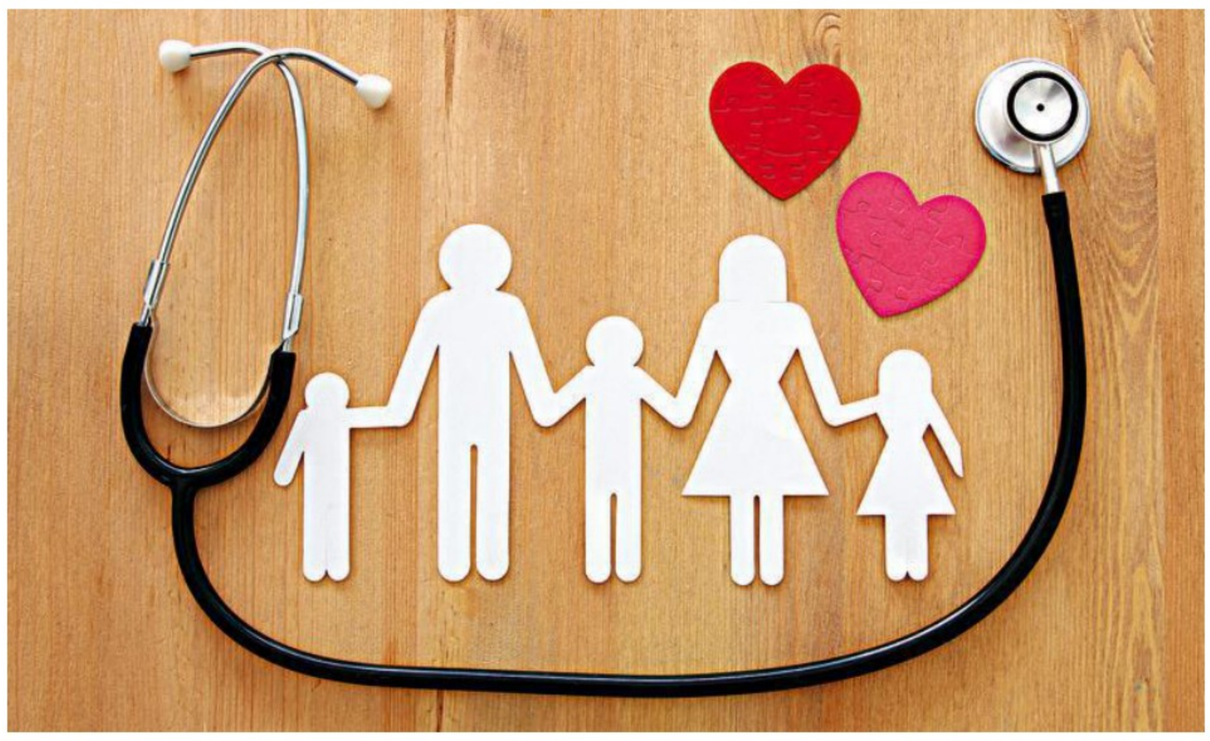
If this policy offers you what you need, opt for it. You can also compare the same policy across companies as they offer the same coverage at different price points. And, comparing this policy with any other health insurance policy of the same company will give you an idea of how pricing works for different terms and conditions and bouquets of covers. No one policy can be recommended because insurance offerings are varied. But such research should be a good starting point.

As for buying different policies for your wife and yourself, consider the various factors that affect it. If it is a floater policy, remember that both of you share the same sum insured, albeit for a lower premium. Here you should take a view on whether the SI will get exhausted within some policy year and you may be left without cover.

Unless it is a floater cover, the premium for the younger person won't be affected by the age of the older person. In fact, you can take a family cover with individual SIs and you will even get a discount. Another factor is income tax benefits on the premium paid. If your wife is a tax assessee and she would like to independently avail the benefit, she should have a separate policy to do so. If not, you can pay the premium on a joint policy and the total premium will be eligible for tax benefits subject to the ceiling.

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.



Health insurance evolving to suit millennial needs

The rise in health emergencies, transcending age groups, has sounded a caution alarm for youngsters to be prepared with a safety shield

HEALTHY MILLENNIALS

Siddharth Singhal

> Even though health insurance helps shield policyholders from unprecedented financial shock, it's also seen as a constant recurring expenditure

> The pandemic has brought about an irreversible revolution in the insurance industry, and also accelerated the awareness level, regardless of age

India has a major share of the millennial demographic – 34% of the total population – to be precise. While this might be a significant percentage, before the pandemic struck, this consumer segment seldom considered having an adequate insurance policy.

The pandemic has brought about an irreversible revolution in the insurance industry, and also accelerated the awareness level, regardless of age.

The rise in health emergencies, transcending age groups, has sounded a caution alarm for youngsters to be prepared with a safety shield as well.

Fortunately, the insurance ecosystem is working in tandem with this transition to effectively cater to millennial needs with innovative health insurance products. More modular, more consumer-centric, here's how health insurance products are evolving to suit millennials.

OPD coverage
Traditionally, the key reason for the younger lot not buying health insurance was that they did not anticipate an event of hospitalisation. However, health insurance no longer gets triggered only when one is hospitalised. OPD, as a category, gained immense traction over the past few months, all because of high-paced product innovation. With OPD coverage, one can now expand coverage to include expenses such as doctor consultations, lab tests, medicines, dental care, and preventive healthcare, which account for more than 70% of healthcare expenditure in the country.

Though beneficial for everyone, this coverage is specially targeted towards millennials who would find OPD expenses more relevant for them.

Cumulative bonus
While NCB, or the no-claim bonus, is a well-known feature in health insurance, the cumulative bonus is considered to be an even more comprehensive version of it.

Even though health insurance shields policyholders from the unprecedented financial shock, it's also seen as a constant recurring expense.

However, new-age plans are woven into customer centricity and offer protection along with affordability. Under cumulative bonus, policyholders can easily increase their sum insured even if they make a claim during the term of the policy.

The bonus gets added to your sum insured at the beginning of every policy year. The useful feature makes sure that you stay protected even if the need to make a claim arises.

Maternity plans
Maternity-related expenses are likely inevitable for most millennials.

While parenthood is a natural and beautiful milestone in one's life, it is also something that needs thorough financial planning. The condition here is, maternity plans need to be bought well before the pregnancy actually occurs.

However, now there are plans available in the market that have made it smoother for people planning a family in the near future. Earlier, the waiting period would range anywhere from 2 to 4 years. Now, the plans offer a waiting period of about 9 months to 1 year which has made it easier to anticipate and assess maternity expenses and buy a policy.

Plans are also now more comprehensive with added benefits and features such as coverage for NICU, lawful termination of pregnancy and even in-vitro fertilization.

Mental health coverage
Mental health issues had earlier been brushed under the carpet. However, it took a global pandemic to drastically change that.

Isolation, loss of loved ones, restricted socialising – there are several factors that have pushed people off the edge. While the prolonged state of the pandemic has adversely affected the mental health of all age groups, studies suggest that more millennials are now prone to depression, anxiety and similar issues.

Keeping this in view, the IRDAI has also mandated the coverage of mental health issues under the ambit of health insurance. To comprehensively cover mental health, one should opt for OPD coverage to ensue doctor consultations are also part of the policy.

Wellness benefits
The pandemic has been a wake-up call for everyone to take stock of their health and immunity. Now, health insurance plans also reward you for staying healthy. So, every time you hit the gym or e-track your steps, your insurer can assess your risk profile better and reward you for performing better.

Mainly targeted at the younger consumer set, wellness benefits are earned by a policyholder who meets the fitness criteria of the insurer.

It could be a discount on premium or a higher sum insured or vouchers that the customer would be rewarded with.

This not only incentivises the policyholder to stay healthy but also helps keep the cumulative risk lower. Not to forget, this encourages the policyholder to renew their health insurance as well.

(The writer is Business Head, Health Insurance, Policybazaar.com)

To buy or to rent?

THINKINVESTOR

You should consider buying a house when you have decided to live in a city for several years. Importantly, you should be comfortable selling the property when you wish to relocate

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

Should you rent a house or buy one for self-occupation? While this question is often asked in the context of young professionals, it is becoming relevant for soon-to-be retirees too. In this article, we discuss the benefits and issues relating to buying a piece of property for self-occupation.

Cost of satisfaction
There is no bigger satisfaction than living in your own dream house. Buying a house is, therefore, a financial decision with a strong emotional element. There are several factors you must consider. For one, when you borrow to buy a house, you are promising the bank to repay the loan with your future income; you could be locking in approximately 30% of your post-tax monthly income for the next, say, 10 years to buy a lumpy, illiquid asset today. For another, if you are a working professional, your employment could require you to relocate to another city or country. What would you do with the house? As a young professional, it is preferable to live in a rented place till you settle down in your profession and stabilise your income levels.

In the past, parents encouraged adult children to buy a house as commitment savings. That is, monthly mortgage payments acted as forced savings, preventing an individual from spending all his/her income. You can now easily set up a systematic investment plan in an equity fund and in a recurring bank deposit instead of buying a house to practice disciplined savings.

But what about soon-to-be retirees? A retiree requires stability of income and lifestyle; moving from one rented house to another during retirement is not easy. Fortunately, most individuals own a property before they retire. But what if you are unable to maintain a large property? Or what if your house is your largest saving and you need monthly cash flow? For one, you can sell the property and live in a retirement home, using the sale proceeds to fund lifestyle expenses. For another, you can sell the house, buy a smaller one and maintain an income-generating investment with the remaining sale proceeds.

Conclusion
You should consider buying a house when you have decided to live in a city for several years. Importantly, you should be comfortable selling the property when you decide to relocate; keeping the property for sentimental reasons and earning rental income may not always be optimal. That said, buying a house for self-occupation is not just a financial decision. Your emotional satisfaction is, indeed, priceless.

(The writer offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)

Personal Loans

Rates and Charges — Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years — Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years — (% of loan amount)

Name of Lender	Interest Rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee
HDFC Bank	11.00 onwards	10,871 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to Rs 4,999
Citi Bank	10.75 onwardS	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 3%
Tata Capital	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3%
ICICI Bank	10.75 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 2.50%
Bank of Baroda	10.60-17.95	10,772-12,683	2,154-2,537	Up to 2% (Min. Rs 1,000 and Max Rs 10,000)
State Bank of India	10.90-15.40	10,846-12,000	2,169-2,400	NIL till 31.01.2023
Axis Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 2%
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3%
Bank of India	10.10-14.60	10,648-11,790	2,130-2,358	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 5,000)
Canara Bank	12.10-15.80	11,148-12,106	2,230-2,421	Up to 1%
Punjab National Bank	10.15-16.70	10,660-12,346	2,132-2,469	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	9.75-16.00	10,562-12,159	2,112-2,432	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	10.49-17.99	10,744-12,694	2,149-2,539	Up to 3%
Union Bank of India	11.15-15.25	10,909-11,961	2,182-2,392	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 7,500)
Bajaj Finserv	11.00 onwards	10,871 onwards	2,174 onwards	Upto 3.84%
Punjab & Sind Bank	10.90-12.50	10,846-11,249	2,169-2,250	Up to 1%
South Indian Bank	12.60-20.35	11,274-13,345	2,255-2,669	Up to 2%
UCO Bank	12.30-12.70	11,198-11,300	2,240-2,260	Up to 1%
IDFC First Bank	10.49 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 3.50%
Bank of Maharashtra	9.25-15.05	10,440-11,908	2,088-2,382	Up to 1%
Karnataka Bank	13.58	11,526	2,305	Up to 0.25% (Minimum Rs 250)
IndusInd Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 3%

Car Loans

Rates and Charges — Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years — (% of loan amount)

Name of Lender	Interest Rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee
Union Bank of India	8.75-10.55	10,319-10,759	Up to Rs. 1,000
Bank of Baroda	8.40-11.85	10,234-11,084	Up to 0.50% (Rs 2,500 - Rs 10,000)
Canara Bank	8.80-11.50	10,331-10,996	waived off till 31st March 2023
Bank of India	8.60-10.60	10,282-10,772	NIL
UCO Bank	8.85 - 10.40	10,343-10,772	1% (Upto Rs 1,500)
State Bank of India	8.40-9.25	10,234-10,440	NIL
IDBI Bank	9.10 - 11.45	10,403-10,984	Rs 2,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	9.05-12.55	10,391-11,262	NIL
Indian Overseas Bank**	9.80	10,574	0.5% - 0.6% (Rs 500-Rs 10,000)
ICICI Bank	8.50 onwards	10,258 onwards	Rs 999-Rs 9,000
HDFC Bank	8.50 onwards	10,258 onwards	Up to 0.50% (Rs 3,500-Rs 8,000)
Karnataka Bank	9.07-11.37	10,396-10,964	Up to 0.60% (Rs 2,500-Rs 11,000)
Federal Bank	10.75	10,809	Rs 2,000 - Rs 4,500
Indian Bank	8.70-9.45	10,307-10,489	Up to 0.50% (Max. Rs 10,000)
South Indian Bank	11.40-12.85	10,971-11,338	1% (Max: Rs. 10,000)
City Union Bank	14.00-14.50	11,634-11,764	1% (Min: Rs 250)

*0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holders. 0.05% interest rate concession to women & armed forces personnel subject to minimum floor ceiling of RLLR.
**0.50% interest rate concession to borrowers with credit scores of 800 and above. Interest rate concession of 0.20% to borrowers for financing Electric 4 Wheelers.

Rates and charges as on January 5 — **Source: Paisabazaar.com**

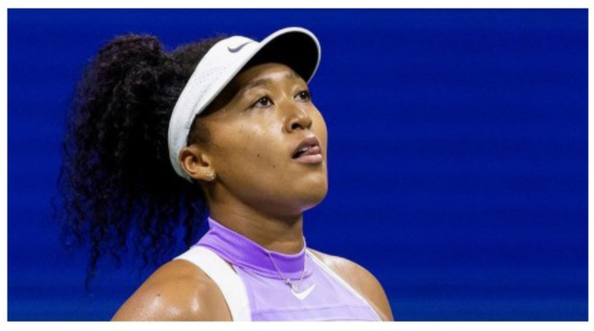
RIGHT ON TOP

Djokovic and Sabalenka clinch Adelaide titles

Top seed Novak Djokovic saved a match-point as he held on to defeat Sebastian Korda 6-7(8), 7-6(3), 6-4 on Sunday and win the Adelaide International. Earlier, Aryna Sabalenka fired an Australian Open warning shot by winning her first title since 2021, beating rising Czech teenager Linda Noskova 6-3, 7-6(4).

ANOTHER MISSING STAR

Osaka joins list of big names missing from Australian Open



Two-time Australian Open champion Naomi Osaka, on Sunday, became the latest star to pull out of the opening Grand Slam of the year. No reason was given with Tennis Australia tweeting: "We will miss her at AO2023." Ukrainian Dayana Yastremska was promoted to the main draw.

WISH LIST

Aussie skipper Cummins wants all bases covered for India series

Australia skipper Pat Cummins wants everything at his "disposal" for the "big" series in India next month and besides frontline spinner Nathan Lyon, he feels Ashton Agar and Travis Head too will be vital to the team's bowling plans. Australia is gearing up for the four-match Border-Gavaskar series, starting in Nagpur on Feb. 9.

YOUNG CHAMP

Anahat Singh wins U-15 British Open squash title

India's fast-rising squash player Anahat Singh beat Sohaila Hazem of Egypt to win the girls under-15 title at the prestigious British Junior Open in Birmingham on Sunday. The 14-year-old had earlier claimed the under-11 title in 2019 and finished runner-up the year after in the under-13 category.

Suryakumar Yadav – the jewel in the crown of India's white-ball warriors

He does not doubt his ability and that's the reason for his success in this format; needs to maintain this mindset when the pitch is not as helpful, says skipper Hardik

SRI LANKA IN INDIA

Ashwin Achal
RAJKOT

Suryakumar Yadav's value as the ultimate match-winner came to the fore once again on Saturday. An unbeaten 51-ball 112 flattened Sri Lanka in the third T20I here, giving India a 2-1 series win.

In scoring his third T20I century in the span of six months, Suryakumar has established himself as the white-ball crown jewel of this Indian team.

Happy faces: When Suryakumar fires he is bound to leave those around him delighted. VIJAY SONEJI

Game-changer

For skipper Hardik Pandya, life is good when Suryakumar clicks. "Today it felt like Sri Lanka versus Surya. It makes my life very easy. Surya is so important for us in white-ball cricket. He changes the game," Hardik said at the post-match press conference. "The way he plays his shots actually breaks the morale of the bowler, and that helps other batters as well."

Suryakumar is well aware of his strengths, so there is little reason for Hardik to give him advice. "You don't tell Surya anything (before he goes in to bat).

"The sort of form he is in, and the clarity he has – you don't have to speak to him. He does not doubt his ability and that's the reason for his success in this format," Hardik said.

Suryakumar was given the ideal platform for launch by Rahul Tripathi.

India-Sri Lanka T20I series in numbers

BATTING	M	Runs	HS	SR	100s/50s
Suryakumar	3	170	112*	175.25	1/1
Shanaka	3	124	56*	187.87	0/1
Axar	3	117	65	195.00	0/1
BOWLING	**M**	**Wkts.**	**BBI**	**Econ.**	**4W**
Umran	3	7	3/48	9.63	0
Madushanka	3	5	2/45	11.25	0
Mavi	3	4	4/22	9.00	1

Tripathi, playing his second T20I, shifted the momentum of India's way by blazing a 16-ball 35 in the PowerPlay.

Special mention

"A special mention of Rahul – the kind of intent he showed can change the momentum of the game. The next batter thought there was something in the wicket, but because of his innings, all of a sudden that ball stopped moving and the bowlers changed their lengths. Then Sri Lanka was chasing the game," Hardik said.

The Indian team has for long spoken about playing aggressive cricket in T20Is, but this has not always come to fruition on the field. The third T20I, however, went with the script, with the batters showing good intent from start to finish.

Hardik admitted that this approach was made easy by the batting-friendly Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium pitch. The key would be to retain this mindset when the pitch is not as helpful, Hardik said.

"It's not that we have to always hit. There might be a case where we do the same thing and score 150. You look for boundaries, and with a good ball, you go for a single.

" But if you think defensive on the first ball itself, you won't even be able to put away the bad balls. The intent and aggression is more important on a tricky wicket," he said.

South Africa denies Australia a clean sweep

SA IN AUSTRALIA

Agence France-Presse
SYDNEY

South Africa was untroubled as it batted out for a first draw in almost six years on the final day of the third Test here on Sunday, denying Australia a series whitewash.

Australia went into the fifth day of the rain-ravaged Test requiring 14 wickets for an improbable victory, but the Proteas comfortably negotiated their way through to earn a first draw in their last 47 Tests.

The scores: Australia 475/4 decl. drew with South Africa 255 in 108 overs (Temba Bavuma 35, Khaya Zondo 39, Simon Harmer 47, Keshav Maharaj 53; Josh Hazlewood 4/48, Pat Cummins 3/60 & 106/2 in 41.5 overs (Sarel Erwee 42 n.o., Heinrich Klaasen 35).

MoM: Usman Khawaja.

MoS: David Warner; *Australia won three-match series 2-0.*

Our job is to observe and guide players, says Sharath

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

The chairman of the junior selection committee, S. Sharath, was given a promotion on Saturday by being announced as one of the five national selectors. During his tenure, India won the 2022 U-19 World Cup and the U-19 Asia Cup.

Commenting on the tasks ahead in a year with the 50-over World Cup and a potential ICC World Test Championship final, Sharath said that while there is a roadmap envisioned, the new committee is yet to sit down and meet and will take it step-by-step.

Though he has played more than 100 First Class games with close to 9,000 runs, he is also the only one with no international cap among the five selectors.

What he lacks in international experience, Sharath makes up with an understanding of the domestic ecosystem built over the last decade.

"As a match referee, we have a column for the TRDO where we give inputs on the players we come across, and I have done 49 First Class matches as a referee.

"I am thankful the Board has recognised the value I can bring to the table. It is a continuation of what I have been doing over the last few years from referee to junior committee to the senior level,"

S. Sharath. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Sharath added.

"I have a good relationship with V.V.S. Laxman (NCA director), and we have worked well over the past year. We have an immense talent pool in the country. Even from the last batch of under-19, we have quite a few players doing well in Ranji Trophy. So our job is just to harness it," he added.

Addressing the issue of not being an international, Sharath explained, "as a selector, the main role is to communicate clearly with the players. More importantly, we should leave our history as a player behind. Our job is to observe, encourage and guide players where needed to help them improve as cricketers."

"I am very thankful to the BCCI and TNCA for giving me this opportunity. It was an emotional moment for my mother as well to see me named as a selector after I missed out on playing for the country," said Sharath as he signed off.

Danilo scores winner for Juventus

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
TURIN

Danilo made sure that Juventus paid the perfect tribute to deceased former captain Gianluca Vialli by netting the only goal in Saturday's 1-0 win over Udinese which fired the Turin giant second in Serie A.

Massimilano Allegri's team jumped one point above AC Milan and to within just four of league leader Napoli.

The results: Serie A: Fiorentina 2 (Saponara 48, Gonzalez 90+1-pen) bt Sassuolo 1 (Berardi 57-pen); Juventus 1 (Danilo 86) bt Udinese 0; Monza 2 (Ciurria 11, Caldirola 90+3) drew with Inter Milan 2 (Darmian 10, Martinez 22).

The Netherlands reasserts its supremacy; Indian slide continues; a first for Germany

WORLD CUP COUNTDOWN

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

1998, Utrecht (June 20-July 1)

The Netherlands made history by being the only country to win the World Cup on home soil twice. It was also its third tournament title and the first time the men's and women's events were organised simultaneously.

The 1996 Olympic champion also became only the second team after Pakistan to hold both the Olympic and World titles at the same time and it extended that domination by winning the 2000 Olympics as well. Spain reached only its second final after the inaugural edition but fell short again, losing 3-2 in extra time, in a repeat of the 1996 Olympic final.

Drought ends: The jubilant Germans after their maiden title win in 2002. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

India, meanwhile, continued its slide down, finishing last in its group with a single, narrow 1-0 win against New Zealand and big losses to Canada (1-4), Germany (1-4), South Korea (3-4) and the Netherlands (0-5) before fighting past Poland and New Zealand a second time in the classification matches.

Top three: The Netherlands, Spain, Germany; **India:** Ninth.

2002, Kuala Lumpur (Feb. 24 to March 4)

Germany reached its second final and finally ended the title drought, winning its first World Cup trophy. After three fourth-place finishes, four bronze medals and a silver in the eight previous editions that underline their frightening consistency, the Germans broke the final barrier with a 2-1 win against former champion and firm favourite Australia.

Germany lost just one game in the tournament – to Spain – while Australia registered comprehensive wins in every game before stumbling in the final. It was the first edition with 16 teams in the fray and saw the emergence of players like Jamie Dwyer and Sohail Abbas and was the first major senior tournament for many youngsters from the Indian side, including the likes of Deepak Thakur, Jugraj Singh and Gagan Ajit Singh that lifted the 2001 Junior World Cup.

It was also the edition that saw India coach Cedric D'Souza being unceremoniously sacked midway through the tournament after three consecutive defeats. But it didn't much change the fortunes, the team finishing 10th.

Top three: Germany, Australia, the Netherlands; **India:** 10th.

Mumbai City romps home against Kerala Blasters

ISL-9

Shayan Acharya
MUMBAI

One the most awaited fixtures of the Indian Super League turned into an one-sided affair with Mumbai City FC thrashing Kerala Blasters 4-0 at the Mumbai Football Arena on Sunday.

Riding on an engrossing first-half – where the Des Buckingham-coached Mumbai outfit scored all the goals – the undefeated home team not only went on notch up 33 points to top the table but also ended Blasters' eight-match unbeaten streak.

Early strikes

Mumbai City took the lead in the fourth minute, with Jorge Pereyra Diaz putting the ball into the back of the net, following a deflection off Blasters' goalie Prabhsukhan Singh Gill. Six minutes later, the Islanders doubled its lead with a brilliant header by the seasoned Greg Stewart.

With the Blasters defence struggling, Bipin Singh made it 3-0 in just 16 minutes. Mehtab Singh sent a long ball to Diaz, who tapped it near the edge of the box and passed it on to Bipin for the seasoned campaigner to find the net.

When the two teams met the last time in October last year, Mumbai had defeated Blasters 2-0, and back at home, the Islanders kept the momentum going. In the 22nd minute, the calm and composed with Diaz made the most of a brilliant ball from Ahmed Jahaouh to get his second goal.

Heading into the half-time trailing 0-4, the Blasters fans, who turned up in large numbers, may have expected the team to bounce back.

The visiting side made a slew of changes but it failed to change its fortunes.

New record

With this victory, Mumbai City has created a new tournament record of eight wins in a row, going past Jamshedpur FC's seven-match streak last year.

The result:

Mumbai City FC 4 (Pereyra Diaz 4, 22, Greg Stewart 10, Bipin Singh 16) bt Kerala Blasters 0.

Hitman: Diaz slotting in one of his two goals for Mumbai City. FOCUS SPORTS/ ISL

INBRIEF

USA drubs Italy, emerges United Cup champion

The United States came up with a powerhouse performance to sweep past Italy 4-0 and claim the inaugural mixed teams United Cup title here on Sunday. Earlier, USA crushed Iga Swiatek-led Poland 5-0 to make the decider, while Italy outgunned Stefanos Tsitsipas' Greece 4-1.

The results (final): USA bt Italy 4-0 {Jessica Pegula bt Martina Trevisan 6-4, 6-2; Frances Tiafoe bt Lorenzo Musetti 6-2, retd.; Taylor Fritz bt Matteo Berrettini 7-6(4), 7-6(6); Madison Keys bt Lucia Bronzetti 6-3, 6-2}.

Cross country star Varsha banned for three years

Railways' Varsha Devi, the winner of the National cross country women's title in Nagaland last year, has been banned for three years after failing a dope test. The 28-year-old was tested at the cross country Nationals last year. Delhi's Prashant Choudhary also tested positive in Nagaland and has been suspended for three years.

Mendigutxia scores the winner for Gokulam Kerala

Gokulam Kerala must be happy with the team's 1-0 victory against Churchill Brothers here on Sunday. Spaniard Sergio Mendigutxia scored the winnier.

Other result: At Panchkula: RoundGlass Punjab 3 (Luka Majcen 12, Brandon Vanlalremdika 15, Krishnananda Singh 77) bt NEROCA FC 1 (Yumnam Gopi Singh 44).

LIVE TELECAST

Pakistan vs New Zealand: 1st ODI, Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 3 p.m.

I-League: Eurosport (SD & HD), 4.30 p.m.

LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Serie A: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 11 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

India has a good chance of reaching semifinals: Kruize

The Dutchman believes the host has two crucial ingredients for success — a good goalkeeper and PC battery and says it would be great to have an India-Holland final

Words of wisdom: Kruize believes that in Reid, India has a coach who can get it the desired results. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

HOCKEY WORLD CUP

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

To be the top-scorer in a tournament like the Hockey World Cup is an achievement. To do so twice in consecutive editions takes special talent. As a Dutchman, Ties Kruize did so in 1973 and 1975 – despite wildly contrasting fortunes of the Netherlands team itself – mastering penalty corners when they were not as ubiquitous as now and playing a huge role in making the sport popular in the country.

Now 70, the Dutch team manager at the 2010 edition, continues to stay updated with the sport.

"It would be great to have an India-Holland final but I don't know, Holland have a new coach and a rather new team with a few youngsters.

"Then again, it's the Dutch team and we have a very good club system so there's a lot of potential.

"As for India, I know the advantage of playing at home, especially in India where the crowd is so fantastic. And of course it's all about the quality of game they play. But if India starts properly I think it has a good chance to at least reach the semifinals," he told in an exclusive interview from The Hague.

Fantastic skills

"Because they (India) have fantastic skills. And the Australian coach you have (Graham Reid), he has found a good combination between playing spectacular hockey and playing for a win. You have a very good short corner specialist, which is very important in hockey nowadays, and a good goalkeeper. And these two are a good base for a good result for the team, so I have expectations from them, I hope they do well," he added.

As a player he was almost single-handedly responsible for denying India in the 1973 final, scoring twice to take the game into penalties before India fumbled.

"I was only 19 or 20 back then, the World Cup was a new competition and it was the first time that a hockey tournament was being televised in the Netherlands.

"And we started very badly because the first two games we played, against Argentina and Pakistan, we drew the first and lost the second and only had one point. And then, as it always happens in sports, something just happens. And, out of nothing, we started to play good hockey."

He expects the same this time around. "I've been in India several times, both as a player and as a manager.

"And, as a player from abroad, very honestly, I think India is the best country to play hockey. It really is fantastic. The crowd – I played in front of almost 45,000 people – and the atmosphere is something really special."

Chirag wins his second race of season

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Chirag Ghorpade held his nerve to win his second race of the season in the premier MRF Formula 2000 category on the concluding day of the second round of the MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Car Racing Championship 2022 at the Madras International Circuit, here on Sunday.

Also in the limelight were veteran Arjun Balu (Race Concepts) and Raghul Rangasamy (MSport) who completed a double each this weekend in the Indian Touring Cars and the Formula LGB category, respectively.

The results (Provisional, winners only): MRF F2000: Race-3 (10 laps): Chirag Ghorpade (15mins, 48.752secs); **Indian Touring Cars: Race-2 (9 laps):** Arjun Balu (Race Concepts) (17:30.324); **Indian Junior Touring Cars: Race-2 (9 laps):** Raja Rajan (Performance Racing) (17:55.058); **Super Stock: Race-2 (9 laps):** Narendran (Redline Racing) (19:18.726); **Formula LGB 1300: Race-2 (10 laps):** Raghul Rangasamy (MSport) (18:57.069); **Race-3 (8 laps):** Raghul (15:14.465); **MRF Saloon Cars (Toyota Etios): Race-3 (8 laps):** 1. Justin Singh (16:44.314).

Pakistan, NZ set to begin WC tune-up

Agence France-Presse
KARACHI

Pakistan and New Zealand will face off in the first of three One-Day Internationals in Karachi on Monday, with an eye on this year's World Cup.

Babar Azam is confident his team will do well in the limited over matches.

Babar's team won eight of the nine One-Day Internationals last year, including a 2-1 series win over a formidable Australia at home. Pakistan will miss pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi who is recovering from a knee injury sustained in November last year, while spinning allrounder Shadab Khan is also out with a recent finger fracture.

Haris Sohail recalled

Opener Fakhar Zaman will bolster the batting, as will Haris Sohail –recalled after two years.

New Zealand, runner-up in the last World Cup won ten of its 16 ODIs last year and have a strong unit led by Kane Williamson. It have been dominant against Pakistan, having won 12 of the last 15 ODIs.

Car racer Kumar dies after a crash at the NCRC in Chennai

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

K.E. Kumar, 59, a noted and respected racer, died in hospital following a crash in the second round of the MRF MMSC FMSCI Indian National Car Racing Championship 2022 at the Madras International Circuit, here on Sunday.

The mishap occurred when Kumar's car came in contact with that of a competitor during the saloon cars race in the morning just before the final right-hander leading to the pit straight. The car slid across the track and landed on the roof after slamming into a fence.

K.E. Kumar. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The race was immediately stopped (red flag). Within minutes, Kumar was extricated from the wreckage and shifted by ambulance to a nearby hospital after a preliminary examination at the track's Medical Centre. However, Kumar succumbed to his injuries.

Unfortunate

Chairman of the Meet Vicky Chandhok said, "It is a most unfortunate incident. Kumar was an experienced racer.

"I have known him for several decades as a friend and competitor. The MMSC and the entire racing fraternity mourn his passing away and convey heartfelt condolences to his family."

Chandhok added that the national governing body for the sport FMSCI and the organisers, MMSC, have launched an investigation into the incident. Meanwhile, as a mark of respect to Kumar, who was a life member of MMSC, the remainder of the day's schedule was cancelled.

Sathiyan suffers shock reverse, eight Indians advance

TABLE TENNIS

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

G. Sathiyan, ranked 39th, suffered a shock defeat to Singapore's Izaac Quek, placed precisely 200 rungs below, while eight Indians moved into the singles second round in the Asian WTTC Continental Stage table tennis tournament in Doha on Sunday.

Nation's top-ranked male player on the world list and widely expected to advance, Sathiyan led 2-0 and again 3-2 before Quek completed an 8-11, 3-11, 11-5, 11-6, 6-11, 11-5, 11-9 upset. Sanil Shetty was the other Indian to lose after running into Iran No 2 Amir Hossain Hodaei in six sets.

Sharath Kamal, Harmeet Desai and Manush Shah faced varying levels of challenges in their opening encounters.

Among the women, Swastika Ghosh was the pick.

The results (first round, involving Indians):

Men's singles: Harmeet Desai bt Abdulla Albalooshi (UAE) 1-3, 11-5, 11-4, 11-5; Manush Shah bt Alan Kurmangaliyev (Kaz) 11-1, 7-11, 11-7, 8-11, 12-10, 11-5; Amir Hossein Hodaei (Iri) bt Sanil Shetty 11-4, 11-13, 7-11, 11-6, 11-5, 11-7; Izaac Quek (Sgp) bt G. Sathiyan 8-11, 3-11, 11-5, 11-6, 6-11, 11-5, 11-9; A. Sharath Kamal bt Jann Mari Nayre (Phi) 11-7, 11-3, 11-5, 11-7.

Women singles: Reeth Rishya bt Zhang Wanling (Sgp) 12-10, 11-3, 1-11, 11-7, 12-10; Swastika Ghosh bt Zauresh Akasheva (Kaz) 13-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-9, 11-7; Diya Chitale bt Sarvinoz Mirkadirova (Kaz) 11-5, 11-1, 11-4, 11-5; Sreeja Akula bt Amruta Phadke (Brn) 11-6, 11-5, 11-3, 11-3; Manika Batra bt Markhabo Magdieva (Uzb) 11-2, 11-3, 11-2, 11-7.

Hemraj and Chhavi win titles

Sports Bureau

Rajasthan's Hemraj Gurjar won the men's 10km title comfortably while Railways' Chhavi Yadav outsprinted Sanjivani Baburao Jadhav (Maharashtra) to take the women's gold in the 57th National cross country championships at Sualkichi, Assam, on Sunday.

The results (finals): Men (10km): 1. Hemraj Gurjar (Raj) 30:24.00s; 2. Anand Singh Rawat (Ser) 30:34.00; 3. Nitesh Kumar Rathva (Ser) 30:35.00.

Under-20 (8km): 1. Shivaji Parashuram (Kar) 24:56.00s; 2. Onkar Panhalkar (Mah) 25:05.00; 3. Divbyanshu Kumar (UP) 25:29.00.

Boys: Under-18 (6km): 1. Walter Kandulna (TN) 19:06.00s; 2. Aryan (Har) 19:33.00; 3. Rijwan (Raj) 19:39.00.

Under-16 (2km): 1. Aman Kumar (Har) 5:52.00s; 2. Chunmun Singh (Del) 5:59.00; 3. Abhishek Kumar (Uttarakhand) 6:03.00.

Women (10km): 1. Chhavi Yadav (Rly) 35:05.00s; 2. Sanjivani Jadhav (Mah) 35:06.00; 3. Munni Devi (Rly) 35:27.00:

Under-20 (6km): 1. Drashtiben Chauduri (Guj) 22:00.00s; 2. Beby (UP) 22:15.00; 3. Pooja Verma (UP) 22:20.00.

Girls: Under-18 (4km): 1. Prachi Devkar (Mah) 14:50.00s; 2. Shilpa Dihora (Guj) 14:53.00; 3. Pranathi (Kar) 15;12.00.

Under-16 (2km): 1. Pratigya Panna (TN) 6:55.00s; 2. Anshu (UP) 7:01.00; 3. Janhavi Hirudkar (Mah) 7:05.00.

Delhi and Rajasthan emerge champions

SUB-JR. VOLLEYBALL

Sports Bureau

Sachin Rathi, Amaan Chowdhury and Harsh Nagar combined well to help Delhi beat Gujarat 25-21, 25-21, 22-25, 25-22 in the boys' final of the ONGC 44th National sub-junior volleyball championship at the Laxmi Public School, Karkardooma, on Sunday.

In the girls' final, India under-18 captain Kavita Suthar and Aina Saharan played a significant role in helping Rajasthan beat Uttar Pradesh 15-25, 25-20, 25-20, 25-19.

The results: Boys (final): Delhi bt Gujarat 25-21, 25-21, 22-25, 25-22. **Third place:** Uttar Pradesh bt Uttarakhand 19-25, 25-13, 20-25, 25-19, 15-7.

Girls (final): Rajasthan bt Uttar Pradesh 15-25, 25-20, 25-20, 25-19. **Third place:** Tamil Nadu bt Haryana 19-25, 25-27, 25-18, 25-16, 15-9.

Gauff reigns supreme in Auckland Classic

Agence France-Presse
AUCKLAND

Top seed Coco Gauff mixed patience with her trademark power to win the final of the rain-hit Auckland Classic against Spain's Rebeka Masarova 6-1, 6-1.

The World No. 7 didn't drop a set at the tournament and effortlessly cast aside 130th-ranked Masarova to clinch her third WTA title and her first in nearly two years.

Gauff. AP

"This gives me a lot of confidence, honestly. You never know how your first week is going to go – could be good or terrible," she said.

Ashwin promotes Move Beyond Golf tournament

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Japanese auto mobile manufacturer *Nissan* is making its first foray into sports in India with golf. The Nissan Move Beyond Golf tournament was held at the Madras Gymkhana here on Sunday with India cricketer R. Ashwin promoting the event.

The tournament saw 90 participants, the second instalment after the one in Delhi NCR in December last year. Ashwin shared his new-found interest for golf and his exposure to the sport during his cricket tours, while adding, "I am very jealous of you all here. I wish I could get permission from home to come here and play golf with you all. Hopefully, someday I could do that."

Nissan has also been the global sponsor of International Cricket Council's big ticket events since 2015 with their partnership running through until the 2023 men's World Cup in India.

It was also the global sponsor of UEFA Champions League from 2014 to 2022 and global multi-club partner of City Football Group since 2014.

Nissan, which also promotes Formula E, will be seen participating in the first-ever race in the country in Hyderabad next month.

She Can primed to do a repeat in feature event

HYDERABAD: The 3-year-old filly She Can, who won well in her last start, should score an encore in the Byerly Turk Million (Gr. 3), the feature event of Monday's (Jan. 9) races here.

1 DECCAN PRINCE PLATE (DIV. III) (1,200m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 1.00 p.m.: 1. Bellaque (8) Suraj Narredu 60, 2. High Reward (4) Md. Ekram Alam 58, 3. Happy Go Lucky (6) Kuldeep S 56.5, 4. Lightning Fairy (3) G. Naresh 56.5, 5. Zohra (2) Mohit Singh 55, 6. Riffa (7) Rafique Sk. 53.5, 7. Sea Of Class (5) Surya Prakash 53 and 8. Fresh Hope (1) Ajay Kumar 52.5.
1. BELLAQUE, 2. HIGH REWARD, 3. HAPPY GO LUCKY

2 AGOSTINI PLATE (1,200m), (Terms) Maiden, Fillies 3-y-o only, 1.30: 1. Alcahol Free (2) Surya Prakash 54.5, 2. Fara (7) Mohit Singh 54.5, 3. Fayola (10) Aneel 54.5, 4. Fly Me (6) Md. Ismail 54.5, 5. Moon Walk (8) B. Nikhil 54.5, 6. Oskars Glory (9) Koushik 54.5, 7. Planet Royale (1) Suraj Narredu 54.5, 8. Queen Empress (3) Akshay Kumar 54.5, 9. Reigning Beauty (4) Afroz Khan 54.5 and 10. Toffee (5) Gaurav Singh 54.5.
1. REIGNING BEAUTY, 2. QUEEN EMPRESS, 3. TOFFEE

3 DECCAN PRINCE PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.00: 1. Baisa (1) Kiran Naidu 60, 2. Divine Connection (8) R.S. Jodha 57, 3. Stay Smart (6) Gaurav Singh 55.5, 4. Deccan Ranger (3) Santosh Raj 54, 5. Tantalising Star (2) B. Nikhil 53, 6. Nishaan (5) Abhay Singh 52, 7. Muaser (7) P. Ajeeth Kumar 51 and 8. Blast In Class (4) Ajay Kumar 50.5.
1. MUASER, 2. BAISA, 3. DECCAN RANGER

4 DECCAN PRINCE PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200m), rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2.35: 1. Mr. Perfect (1) Mohit Singh 60, 2. Sopranos (3) Akshay Kumar 56.5, 3. Explosive (6) P. Ajeeth Kumar 55, 4. Lodon Bell (4) Afroz Khan 53.5, 5. N R I Fantasy (7) Ashad Asbar 53, 6. Classical Music (2) Gaurav Singh 51, 7. Miss Madhura Nagar (5) Santosh Raj 51 and 8. Delhi Heights (8) Surya Prakash 50.
1. MR. PERFECT, 2. SOPRANOS, 3. N R I FANTASY

5 G. VASUDEVA REDDY MEMORIAL CUP (1,400m), rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 3.10: 1. Morior Invictus (5) P. Ajeeth Kumar 60, 2. Unsung Hero (4) Rafique Sk. 60, 3. True Icon (1) B. Nikhil 57.5, 4. Thanks (8) Kuldeep S 57, 5. Bellagio (3) Afroz Khan 55, 6. La Mirage (2) Suraj Narredu 54, 7. Candy Girl (7) Gaurav Singh 53.5, 8. Crimson Rose (9) Akshay Kumar 53.5 and 9. Castlerock (6) G. Naresh 52.
1. CRIMSON ROSE, 2. UNSUNG HERO, 3. THANKS

6 BYERLY TURK MILLION (Gr. III) (1,200m) (Terms), Fillies 3-y-o only, 3.45: 1. Calista Girl (2) B. Nikhil 56, 2. Proud Mary (3) Suraj Narredu 56, 3. She Can (4) Akshay Kumar 56, 4. Bash On Regardless (1) P. Ajeeth Kumar 53 and 5. Sangreal (5) P. Trevor 53.
1. SHE CAN, 2. PROUD MARY

7 KASU BRAHMANANDA REDDY MEMORIAL CUP (1,200m), rated 60 to 85, 4.20: 1. Ballerina (1) P. Trevor 60, 2. Amyra (3) Mukesh Kumar 59, 3. Kingston (6) Gaurav Singh 58.5, 4. Black Onyx (2) Akshay Kumar 54.5, 5. Xfinity (9) P. Ajeeth Kumar 54.5, 6. Stunning Force (8) Mohit Singh 54, 7. Ayr (4) Afroz Khan 52.5, 8. Trump Star (5) Santosh Raj 52.5 and 9. Blissful (7) Md. Ekram Alam 51.5.
1. BALLERINA, 2. BLACK ONYX, 3. XFINITY

8 MOMENT OF GLORY PLATE (1,200m), rated up to 25 (Cat. III), 4.55: 1. Aiza (5) Mukesh Kumar 60, 2. Inside Story (1) R.S. Jodha 60, 3. Star Cruise (9) Kuldeep S 60, 4. Canterbury (7) Md. Ekram Alam 58.5, 5. Good Tidings (2) Santosh Raj 57.5, 6. Aarya (4) Abhay Singh 57, 7. Sweet Melody (8) Afroz Khan 57, 8. Alina (3) P. Ajeeth Kumar 56 and 9. Space Time (6) Aneel 54.
1. AIZA, 2. GOOD TIDINGS, 3. STAR CRUISE

Day's Best : **BALLERINA**

Jackpot: 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8.

Mini Jackpot: (i) 2, 3, 4 & 5. (ii) 5, 6, 7 & 8.

Treble: (i) 1, 2 & 3. (ii) 3, 4 & 5. (iii) 6, 7 & 8.

Tanala: All races.